



Aboriginal news from across Turtle Island and beyond
September 18 – 25, 2015

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Aboriginal Arts & Culture

A peek inside FNUniv's pow wow

By Alec Salloum, Leader-Post September 18, 2015



The First Nations University Pow Wow was held on the First Nations University of Canada grounds in Regina on Sept. 17, 2015.

REGINA — With beating drums, the clinking of jingle dancers, and singers, the pow wow began.

“Everything starts with the drum — it’s the heartbeat of the culture,” said Brad Bellegarde, president of the First Nations University of Canada’s students association.

And representing the heartbeat of the culture and Mother Earth, as the drums started, the ceremony came to life.

The Tony Cote Welcome Back Pow Wow on Thursday welcomed new and returning students to the FNUniv and the University of Regina.

A pow wow “is the celebration of culture for First Nations people ... pow wow is our way of showcasing our culture, and welcoming community members that are from non-indigenous backgrounds to our campus.”

The crowd, representative of the universities’ diverse student base, was welcomed to participate in the dancing and celebrations, the event’s MC often encouraging “street clothes” crowd members to join with the traditional dancers.

“It’s key for us to be able to welcome non-indigenous community members to our events for the basis of peacefully coexisting on treaty territory.”

“It’s for healing ... my dance represents healing,” agreed Jordynn Delorme, a jingle dress dancer. “When we dance, our jingles, our prayers go up to the creator to be answered.”

On Thursday, Delorme danced for her grandmother, but also for her culture. “A lot of our culture was taken from us — during the residential school days.”

“We’re bringing back our culture,” said Delorme.

Cote worked at the FNUniv for over a decade. Bellegarde remembers him as a passionate advocate for aboriginal education. “He’s a visionary ... and he’s very adamant about indigenous education. And to rebrand this pow wow, the Tony Cote Welcome Back Pow Wow, he can forever welcome students as he has for the past 12 or 13 years.”

The pow wow was renamed in 2014, though a welcome back pow wow had been held in previous years.

Cote is also an elder, served as a chief in his community, received the Saskatchewan Order of Merit, and is an army veteran of the Korean War.

“To have an elder always on campus, it’s the cornerstone of our culture and our foundation — and our tradition here at (FNU).

The pow wow was also welcoming artists and speakers in town for the Performing Turtle Island Symposium, an event exploring the identity of First Nations people.

“Pow wow breaks down those barriers, those typical stereotypes that you would hear about First Nations people,” said Bellegarde. “Bridges can be built through the arts.”

Direct Link: <http://www.leaderpost.com/life/peek+inside+fnuniv/11371915/story.html>

Despair, hope live in First Nations artwork at Cape Breton University exhibit

ERIN POTTIE Cape Breton Bureau
Published September 19, 2015 - 7:02am



Marjorie Graves looks up at The Witness Blanket, a 40-foot cedar quilt featuring over 800 objects that were collected from residential schools across Canada. (ERIN POTTIE / Cape Breton Bureau)

SYDNEY — Albert Marshall says a piece of aboriginal artwork in the form of a wooden quilt conjures up many emotions.

“I see hate, I see despair, I see shattered dreams, I see hopelessness,” the Mi’kmaq elder and residential school survivor told a crowd at Friday’s Cape Breton University art exhibit opening.

“At the same time I see hope — there’s hope in that blanket.”

Pieced together using cedar frames, The Witness Blanket contains over 800 objects collected from residential schools across Canada.

Marshall said while there are positive movements toward healing, he believes a far greater legacy of suffering has been left behind.

“It was a very turtle-pace effort put in place of trying to reconnect who we were as Mi’kmaq people,” said Marshall.

“Of course you cannot go any further (in a) discussion about reconnection unless you mention language. Because language is the essence of who we are, and at this very moment the language unfortunately is disappearing on a 90-degree angle.”

Aboriginal artist Carey Newman, whose father was a residential school survivor, took a team across Canada in 2013 and 2014 to collect stories and artifacts from residential schools, churches, government buildings, and traditional and cultural structures.

Nine of the components come from Nova Scotia, including a plaque that once hung outside the doctor’s office at the residential school in Shubenacadie.

There are also several multimedia stations available in a second part of the piece that weave together shared memories

“I was punished for trying to speak in our language, like most of our survivors will recall,” said Grand Chief Ben Sylliboy, who spent five years in a residential school, beginning in 1948.

“We still have marks that we suffered when we were at the school. I know a few people today who still don’t want to talk about it. It’s something that you never live down.”

Traditional teacher Lottie May Johnson, one of 10 residential school survivors selected to advise the country’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission, said she used hateful experiences to motivate her to achieve a better life.

“I think what made me always want to push on to do things was the voice of this one nun that was always telling me, ‘You’ll never be anybody, you’ll never amount to nothing,’” she said.

Catherine Arsenault, gallery director of cultural resources, said the piece, which stands eight feet tall and 40 feet long, is complex.

“It’s an impressive piece on its own, and it’s beautiful to stand back and look at,” said Arsenault. “Then it’s very interesting when you start to engage with the individual elements in the blanket as well.

“Each individual item is something to be engaged in. It may not be a single visit that some people wish to make.”

The nationally touring installation will run at CBU until Oct. 16 and will be on display at the Glooscap Heritage Centre in Millbrook from Oct. 19 to Nov. 28.

Direct Link: <http://thechronicleherald.ca/novascotia/1312223-despair-hope-live-in-first-nations-artwork-at-cape-breton-university-exhibit>

Indigenous photographer fills void with his work

By Villeneuve, Melissa on September 19, 2015.

Lethbridge Herald

It all began with wanting to show the world through the eyes of an indigenous photographer.

Jeff Thomas, an urban-based Iroquois photographer, writer and curator, has succeeded in his goal.

His latest exhibition, “A Necessary Fiction: My Conversation with Nicholas de Grandmaison,” opened at the University of Lethbridge Art Gallery on Thursday. It runs until Oct. 29.

Thomas was born and raised in Buffalo, N.Y., and his reserve is Six Nations in southern Ontario. He now calls Ottawa his home.

His interest in photography began in high school in the mid-’70s. He was in a car accident in 1979, and wasn’t able to work again, so he turned to photography as a way to keep busy.

“It flourished from there. It became very important in terms of building a new life for myself and my family,” said Thomas.

When he first started producing his own work, he looked for indigenous photographer role models, but he couldn’t find any.

“I realized there was something missing and that’s really what determined my work. It began by what I call ‘indigenizing’ the medium of photography. It bled over into curating as well.”

Thomas curated his first exhibition for the National Archives in Ottawa in 1996. It was one of the first times an indigenous curator had worked with a collection like that, he said.

“A Necessary Fiction: My Conversation with Nicholas de Grandmaison” is a culmination of many years of work.

“It’s been a slow burn over the last three decades. This is another stage in that journey. Essentially what I do is repurpose archival collections to address contemporary issues facing the indigenous community in terms of self-identity and self-determination. Having a more visual conversation and expanding how we see paintings from the past, and that they still have relevance. For me, when I look at these paintings that were done, they really come alive for me.”

Thomas said he wanted to recognize the important role of elders through his work. His elder and great-aunt, Emily General, was an activist, and Thomas said her passion instilled in him the desire to carry on the legacy.

“She emphasized the social responsibility we all have to our communities,” he said.

He also focuses on the father-son relationship, with portraits of his own son included in the exhibition.

This is Thomas' fourth visit to Lethbridge. He spoke at a U of L Art Now series a decade ago, had an exhibition at the Southern Alberta Art Gallery in 2006, then returned for a residential school exhibition.

In 1998, Thomas was awarded the Canada Council's prestigious Duke and Duchess of York Award in Photography. He was inducted into the Royal Canadian Academy of Art in 2003.

By viewing his work, Thomas hopes people see a different view and get a sense of what an indigenous person sees through a camera.

"I think it's important to make that bridge to mainstream society in terms of saying that it's not all clichés and stereotypes. We're real people living next door to you, and this is how we see and think about the world around us."

To view more of Thomas' portfolio of work, visit <http://www.jeff-thomas.ca>.

Direct Link: <http://lethbridgeherald.com/news/local-news/2015/09/19/indigenous-photographer-fills-void-with-his-work/>

River Cree pushes back completion date for new concert facility

Edmonton, AB, Canada / 630 CHED - Edmonton Breaking News, Traffic, Weather and Sports Radio Station

September 19, 2015 10:20 pm



The construction of a new, larger, and permanent concert facility at the River Cree Resort and Casino is going to take a bit longer than expected.

Vik Mahajan, the company's general manager and chief operating officer, says they were, perhaps, a little ambitious in their time line.

“We expected it to be completed more towards the fall, October, or so on,” explained Mahajan. “And, unfortunately...you know, it’s certain regular delays that happen in a project like this one. You know we had a very aggressive target to begin with — it’s delayed by a couple of months — a month-and-a-half, or so, which is still a very aggressive target.”

The River Cree shut down its old concert facility back in March — a large white tent known as ‘[The Venue](#)’ — due to building code deficiencies.

Mahajan, however, says they will now erect another temporary concert tent at the same location, until the permanent facility is completed; “maybe by mid-December.”

“I apologize that we’re a little bit delayed. I’m hopeful that everybody is going to be patient with us and when you see the new product, you’re going to be very happy.”

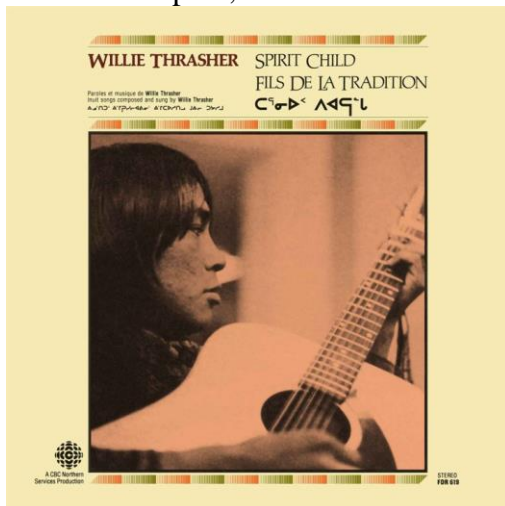
Work on the new tent is expected to take a couple of weeks, with Air Supply expected to play there on the 3rd of October. (*djs, td, Photo: River Cree*)

Direct Link: <http://www.630ched.com/2015/09/19/river-cree-pushes-back-the-completion-date-for-new-concert-facility/>

'Native North America' Artist Willie Thrasher Celebrated with Reissue

By [Alex Hudson](#)

Published Sep 22, 2015



Last fall's celebrated [Native North America \(Vol. 1\): Aboriginal Folk, Rock, and Country 1966-1985](#) compilation featured tracks from a selection of under-appreciated Indigenous musicians. Now, [Light in the Attic](#) is giving fans a closer look at one of those artists, as

Inuit psych-folk songwriter [Willie Thrasher](#) will be celebrated with a reissue of 1981's *Spirit Child* on October 30.

A few songs from *Native North America* — "Spirit Child," "Old Man Carver" and "We Got to Take You Higher" — come from this album. An announcement explains that Thrasher was born in the Northwest Territories in 1948 and was taken from his family at the age of five to be put into a residential school. He drummed in the '60s band the Cordells before he took up guitar and became a musical traveller.

He released *Spirit Child* through the CBC, and "Silent Inuit" became a hit in norther communities, although the album got little commercial support. These days, he [busks in Nanaimo, BC](#).

According to a press release, "On *Spirit Child* you hear echoes of Neil Young and Creedence Clearwater Revival but injected with Native consciousness, storytelling, poetry, history, and ceremony." Scroll past the tracklist below to hear the wah-flecked folk rock song "We Got to Take You Higher."

Copies are available to pre-order right [here](#) on CD, digital download, standard black vinyl, or limited orange vinyl.

UPDATE (9/22, 12:36 p.m.): Willie Thrasher will be undergoing a scheduled surgery today at Vancouver General Hospital. He is planning to play some shows in February of 2016.

Spirit Child:

1. Silent Inuit
2. Forefathers
3. Spirit Child
4. Wolves Don't Live by the Rules
5. Eskimo Named Johnny
6. Old Man Carver
7. Beautiful
8. Old Man Inuit
9. Shingle Point Whale Camp
10. We Got To Take You Higher
11. Inuit Chant

Direct Link:

http://exclaim.ca/music/article/native_north_america_artist_willie_thrasher_celebrated_w_ith_reissue

First Nations traditions meet fine dining

By [Bex vanKoot](#) / Yahoo Canada News – Wed, 23 Sep, 2015



This story is part of a [week-long series](#) exploring how we as Canadians define "Canadian food," and how it has evolved in modern Canada.

There has been renewed interest in the emergence of First Nations traditional foods in the restaurant business, in no small part thanks to Canadian TV celebrity chef David Wolfman on APTN's [Cooking with the Wolfman](#) and his drool-worthy food truck, which graced the streets of Toronto during this summer's [Pan Am Games](#).

But now that the games are over, where can you turn for a taste of traditional First Nations food? While options may be restricted to Canada's largest cities, chefs are finding innovative ways to bring their favourite foods to those who know where to find them.

Johl Ringuette, Anishnawbe chef at [Nish Dish](#) Marketeria and Catering, has taken on traditional-inspired banquet and boutique food service in Toronto. "Food and gathering together to share is our most important and enjoyed way as Anishnawbe people. I was raised in the country outside of and north of North Bay, Ontario," Ringuette explains of his inspiration. "My father was a hunter and fisher and loved to be outdoors up at the two camps he had built as a teenager... Later in life I moved to Toronto to pursue post secondary education," but despite all his best efforts to keep up with family tradition, he said, he "never found our food anywhere."

When he began to work more closely with the Toronto aboriginal community, he realized he wasn't the only one lamenting the lack of traditional food. "Years later I worked at Aboriginal Legal Services and several other Aboriginal agencies and discovered that everyone in my community had the same challenge. There just wasn't our food available unless you could attend the summer pow wow events, which they are only 2 in the central city."

The desire to fill this need drove him to learn more. "I had worked in the food industry in many capacities for many years. So with the support of my Traditional teacher Mark

Thompson I began a part-time catering business in May 2005. During the years I've been taught by many community members of food and recipes that they grew up with.”

Trying to bring traditions into the business of food isn't easy. Profit margins in the restaurant and catering industry are already slim. As Ringuette points out, the foods specific to native traditions can be prohibitively expensive. The most common ingredients used at Nish Dish - venison, wild rice, berries and lake fish - are not only costly but can even be difficult to find.

And economics isn't the only hurdle. Ringuette brings up an important and perhaps contentious point about what we take for tradition. He believes we need to start “changing our idea of what is traditional food, because it's not bannock.” Bannock, the fried bread which is one of the most popular traditional foods in Canadian indigenous restaurants, is actually Scottish.

“We had no choice but to make it,” Ringuette explains, “as fishing and hunting were made illegal and leaving the reservations was not allowed. Rations of flour, sugar and salt were provided by the government so that was how we began to make the bread and fry it too.”

Ringuette prefers to focus on traditional foods from pre-colonization times: greens, berries, roots, beans, squash and corn. “The crops for our traditional Three Sisters Stew,” one of their most popular dishes, Ringuette adds, “butternut squash, green beans and corn were grown together and all three assist each other in the growth process. This regenerates the soil rather than depleting. It's something that my ancestors learned through working with the land and nature.”



The 'Three Sisters': Squash, corn and green beans. (Flickr/Chris Feser)

Despite its tenuous position as a traditional food, bannock is probably the most popular item on the menu among First Nations restaurants. In Vancouver, [Salmon and Bannock](#) Bistro owners Inez Cook and Remi Caudron are bringing Nuxalk Nation traditions to life with a modern twist.

The bistro opened in 2010 just ahead of the winter Olympics when, Cook says, they “realized the whole world was coming here and there was not a First Nations restaurant in Vancouver anymore.” But like Ringuette, they have faced their share of challenges, between the difficulties of sourcing foraged wild plants, the restrictions on purchasing from commercial buyers with limited selection, and the expense and seasonal availability of quality game meats.

“It’s so terribly expensive [to source ingredients],” Cook says, but that isn’t stopping them. They do what they can. “We are a bistro that wants everyone to feel welcome and keep prices for every budget on our menu.”

If budget is less of a concern for you than authenticity and experience, the immersive tours hosted by [Haida House](#) at Tllaal, Graham Island, B.C. brings the cultural explorer into the homes of local chefs. Haida Gwaii is also known as “the Galapagos of the North” for its incredible biodiversity and unique ecology, making Haida House tours a truly unique experience, and not just for food.

“In order to have our guests experience a true, traditional Haida dinner, we always encourage them to take in some of the local chefs who offer dinner in their homes,” says Joelle Rabu, General Manager for Haida House. “Those dinners are steeped in tradition and usually include a song or some storytelling during the evening with dinner served Tapas style with many dishes to try.”



Smoked salmon snack at Haida House (Facebook/Haida House at Tllaal-Haida Gwaii)

But for Haida House, their biggest challenge is keeping up with demand. During high season, both tour organizers and those with whom they arrange for visitors to share a table are booked solid. For traditional chefs, this means a great deal of time spent hunting, gathering and preparing in the traditional methods. Each of the tours offered at Haida House - both four day and seven day getaways - include at least one trip to experience such a meal.

The rest of the time, Haida House serves a mix of modern and traditionally-inspired fare. They aim for fresh and local, employing both local Haida chefs and Continental chefs from off the island.

“We work with the local farms also to provide fresh greens, berries and seasonal vegetables,” says Rabu. “The fusion seems to work in our favour. Our menus feature fresh Halibut, Coho or Spring Salmon, Fresh Prawns, Scallops, K’aaw (herring roe on kelp), Naaw (octopus), Candied or Lox smoked Salmon, prepared in a contemporary fashion. The traditional way of preparing these foods, we leave to the local Haida Chefs who offer meals in their homes.”

This perhaps speaks to the struggles faced by those trying to bring traditional foods into a contemporary restaurant environment. But more and more we are seeing examples like the chefs at Nish Dish, Salmon & Bannock, and on Haida House tours trying new ways to explore native foods and share them with a hungry public.

Direct Link: <https://ca.news.yahoo.com/first-nations-traditions-meet-fine-dining-170248165.html>

Buffy Sainte-Marie on Winning the Polaris Prize, Viet Cong, and Indigenous Activism

September 24, 2015

By [James Wilt](#)

It's 5 AM when [Buffy Sainte-Marie](#) picks up the phone at her home in Hawaii, but there's no semblance of fatigue in her voice: the 74-year-old folk legend and, as of this week, [2015 Polaris Prize victor](#) dispenses sagely advice between bursts of kind laughter. Sainte-Marie, born on [Piapot Cree First Nation](#) in Saskatchewan, came up in the industry during the 60s alongside the likes of Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, and Neil Young, releasing her now-legendary [It's My Way!](#) in 1964. Since then, she's dropped another 20 albums, been [blacklisted](#) by the US government, been sampled by [Kanye West](#) (and then [Young Thug](#)), and become one of the most renowned First Nations activists in the world.

VICE: You've won many awards in your time. How does it feel to pick up the Polaris Prize?

Buffy Sainte-Marie: It's a big surprise, I'll tell you that! It's wonderful. I'm really thrilled. I have a lot of respect for the Polaris Prize for specific reasons. One of things that makes it so personally nice for me is that I had the time to listen to all of the other artists: I listened to the entire album for everybody. I got to hear some of the lesser cuts that might not get played on the radio. Full respect for all the different kinds of music that people are making in Canada.

Did any of the albums stand out to you most?

I had my own little shortlist: I couldn't narrow it down to one. I had no idea who was going to win: I didn't think it was going to be me. I liked [Tobias Jesso Jr.](#), I liked [Jennifer Castle](#)'s album, I liked [Caribou](#), and I really liked [Viet Cong](#). And God bless them for [changing their name](#), it's the smartest thing they could have done. If the name is distracting from the music, just change it. I had big hugs for them and congratulated them for the decision to change their name.

You were a very early pioneer of using electronics in your music. What's it like to hear artists like Caribou and [Drake](#) take these technologies to entirely new levels?

It's a dream come true for me. As you say, I've been into electronic music since the 60s: I made the first-ever totally electronic quadraphonic vocal album ever, called [Illuminations](#). People really, really didn't understand it. But art students did. Electronic musicians did. There were people making electronic music back then: [Jon Hassell](#) and [Brian Eno](#) and [Morton Subotnick](#). But audiences were not hearing it because the record companies and the market weren't really that interested in it so they weren't bringing it to people.

I think it's real important to acknowledge the role of a good record company. Especially True North in this regard because they got this album to people's ears. That's the biggest difference with this album: it's not as though it's better than [Running for the Drum](#) or [Coincidence and Likely Stories](#), but they didn't get heard. They didn't have a record company really making it available to radio stations who then make it available to other people. The internet didn't used to be what it is now. Some people were afraid of electronic music. It's really nice. I'm glad. I think it's a wonderful medium that offers all kinds of avenues for creativity.

The name of the album, [Power in the Blood](#), comes from an [Alabama 3](#) title. Why did you decide to reference that album?

Well I'm a big fan of Alabama 3: they wrote the theme song for *The Sopranos*! [sings first two lines of song] They were a bunch of guys in Brixton, London. They are a really original, wonderful band: they're friends of mine, they're fans of mine, I'm a fan of them. They had written a song called "Power in the Blood"—"There is power in the blood, justice in the sword / When that call it comes, I will be ready for war." I thought it'd make a great peace song; they were pretty surprised by that. By rewriting it to reflect contemporary issues, the idea was to borrow their idea—it is their song, really—and give it to my audience in a new way. I love the song and how it turned out.

We've witnessed a resurgence of Indigenous peoples in the public eye, from musicians like yourself and [Tanya Tagaq](#), to [Idle No More](#), to [Ashley Callingbull](#) (the Cree woman who recently won Mrs. Universe). Why do you think there's been a notable upswing, even in the last two or three years?

I think a lot of it has to do with our ability to get beyond those who would shut us up. It's because of the internet. We're networked. It's not as if we're smarter: we've been smart all

along. It's not as though we're suddenly trying to make changes: we've been doing that all along. There's a very broad strength in Indian Country. But it used to be so, so hard to be networked. We have a long way to come and can use all the support we can get in networking, but at least it's starting so those beyond our community can know what's going on. [Shoal Lake](#) is going to be a huge issue: it provides water for the city of Winnipeg, and they don't have their own needs covered! There are always going to be improvements that need to be made and issues to talk about, but I really do think we can be part of making positive change. And so can government.

You participated in and wrote songs about the anti-war movement ("Universal Soldier") and American Indian Movement ("Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee"). Do you have any advice for young activists who are depressed by the state of the world?

In the first place, get a bath and a good night's sleep. You don't want to burn out. St. Francis was very smart: he said you have to take care of "brother mule," or your body. So take care of yourself. Don't cave into peer pressure and burn out. There's so much you can do through a song. Here's some specific advice: in your presentation, you need to be brief, clear, and engaging. You don't want to give people the truth in an enema. Hopefully, you want to attract people to your issues and have them want to work alongside what you're trying to accomplish. That kind of brevity that a songwriter has: I also got to explore that on [Sesame Street](#). The world has a very short attention span. If you go in knowing that, and instead of having an axe to grind you have information to give, it's a real different approach. It stays very positive even if you're working with a difficult, painful, tragic issue like genocide or residential schools or war. Don't burn out!

What's next for you? Are you ever going to kick back and retire?

I've had such an interesting career, over 50 years. I retire whenever I feel like it. I took 16 years off to raise my son, and have never let a record deadline keep me from doing what I really need to do, [like] when my mom was passing. I don't have any plans to stop being an artist. Artists just don't stop. I only go on the road when I think I have something to offer people, so I'll probably continue to come and go on the scene and not worry about it very much. Let somebody else do some of the work! Everybody who's got dreams in their hearts and issues that are bothering them: don't be afraid of it. Just keep on keeping on. We're all ripening every day.

Direct Link: <http://www.vice.com/read/buffy-sainte-marie-on-winning-the-polaris-prize-viet-cong-and-indigenous-activism>

Double dose of authors at the En'owkin Centre



Julie Flett



Joanne Arnott

— image credit: Submitted photos

by [Dan Walton - Penticton Western News](#)

posted Sep 22, 2015 at 5:00 PM— updated Sep 24, 2015 at 5:50 PM

The [En'owkin Centre Gathering Space](#) is ready to showcase the works of two Aboriginal authors as part of the 2015 Literary Reading Series.

On Sept. 24, Joanne Arnott will be sharing a reading from her work between noon and 1 p.m. Arnott's poetry explores her personal experience as a Métis and a mother of six, shining a light on issues commonly faced by mixed-race mothers living in poverty.

"My poetry isn't completely abstract, sometimes it gets political," she said. "I tend to write for adults but anyone is welcome of course, I have a musical background with family so it's enjoyable to listen to."

The most pressing political issue Arnott writes about is the disproportionately high rate of murdered and missing aboriginal women.

"I write about experiences I had as a young woman. It can be quite emotional stuff."

Later in the afternoon, from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m., will be a reading from children's author and illustrator Julie Flett. Her first opportunity to illustrate came by chance when she was asked to do work for *The Moccasins* by Earl Einarson.

"That was the first book I worked on," she said. "I was asked to consider illustrating, never done it before, and I really enjoyed it."

The Moccasins features a young foster child who receives a pair of moccasins from his adoptive mother to feel proud about his community.

“My friend who was a librarian was reading to a group of children, and one of the boys was a foster child. As she was reading the story he stopped her halfway through and said, ‘I’m a foster child,’ and he smiled and felt represented and cared for.”

After hearing more stories about the positive effect her illustrations had on children, Flett realized she could have a similar effect through writing.

“I found that when I was making the illustrations, I was able to access imagery that I would have connected to as a child, and bring that into the drawings, so I applied that then to the writing process.”

She said her illustrative work is strongly influenced by 1970s pictures books she was surrounded by as a young girl, and presents her ideas by melding her paintings and sketches into collages.

“I love being able to feel represented in my own family – we didn’t have books to look to when we were young that made us feel represented. They’re important works and I wanted to be able to contribute to my culture.”

To continue building her culture, Flett has published a book on the Cree alphabet, which takes on a different tone through her language.

“My family is mixed Metis and Cree. Through speaking the language, you hear a much different world view – it’s not a romantic language.”

Nevertheless, her books offer a sense of intimacy that’s perfect for parents to read to their children.

“A lot of my books work well one on one, similar to Earl Einarson’s *Moccasins*, they are the kinds of books where the child might stop you to tell you what connects them to the story.”

Direct Link: <http://www.pentictonwesternnews.com/entertainment/328739981.html>

Aboriginal Business & Finance

Peace Region firm named best Aboriginal business

Mike Carter / Alaska Highway News
September 18, 2015 09:08 AM



Doreen Shadow (left) and her partner Lyle Pringle pose with one of the several trucks in their fleet Thursday afternoon in Pouce Coupe. The couple recently learned they had been awarded Best Business of the Year in the three-to-10 person enterprise category of the BC Aboriginal Business Awards. Photo By Mike Carter

A former Dawson Creek business will be honoured at the upcoming BC Aboriginal Business Awards in Vancouver.

RNN Sales and Services, which recently relocated to Pouce Coupe, will collect the Business of the Year award in the three-to-10 person enterprise category at a gala dinner awards ceremony at the Hyatt Regency Vancouver Oct. 14.

“It’s pretty awesome,” co-owner Doreen Shadow said over the phone from her new office Thursday morning.

“We had to keep it under our hat. We found out at the end of August, but because they had to contact (the runners up), they didn’t want us to get too loud about it.”

Co-owned by Shadow and her partner, Lyle Pringle, RNN Sales and Rentals operates a fleet of 12 mobile treatment centres that service oil and gas companies throughout the region.

Shadow is a member of the Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation and is a registered nurse with more than 17 years of experience. She was born in Dawson Creek and raised in Fort St. John.

The team at RNN consists of fully qualified emergency medical responders and technicians, paramedics, and nurses.

RNN also owns a 540-acre shale pit east of Dawson Creek on the Spirit River Highway.

Shadow says the new location in Pouce Coupe will help the business grow.

“We were cramped into a city lot in Dawson Creek,” she said.

“We were moving the last two weeks while we were wondering if we were going to win.”

Soon after setting up on the new property, a camera crew from Vancouver arrived to film a three-minute video about the business that will be shown at the awards ceremony.

Kamloops-based All Nations Trust Company nominated Shadow and Pringle.

This year marks the seventh anniversary of the BC Aboriginal Business Awards.

“Aboriginal entrepreneurship is key to British Columbia’s growth and prosperity,” Premier Christy Clark said in a statement. “(Our) aboriginal entrepreneurs continue to create opportunities throughout the province, and (this) is a great opportunity to celebrate their success.”

Fifteen aboriginal businesses will be honoured in next month’s ceremony.

The BC Aboriginal Business Awards are presented by the BC Achievement Foundation in partnership with the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, and are supported by New Relationship Trust, BC Hydro, Teck Resources, Canadian National Rail Co., Encana, Spectra Energy, and MNP.

- See more at: <http://www.alaskahighwaynews.ca/dawson-creek/peace-region-firm-named-best-aboriginal-business-1.2062738#sthash.TXsQRVSN.dpuf>

Aboriginal Community Development

20 years after Ipperwash crisis, First Nation accepts \$95M offer

Deal includes cleanup and resettlement of lands

[CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 18, 2015 9:14 AM ET Last Updated: Sep 20, 2015 2:01 PM ET



Members of the Kettle and Stony Point First Nation walk along the beach at Ipperwash Provincial Park. (Dave Chidley/Canadian Press)

An Ontario First Nation has accepted a settlement from Ottawa 20 years after the dispute over Camp Ipperwash led to the death of aboriginal protester Dudley George.

The Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation say members approved the deal with the federal government in a vote held on Friday.

They say the more than 90-million dollar financial settlement also includes the return of land appropriated by the federal government in 1942 and the cleanup of Stony Point lands.

The Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation is located along the shores of Lake Huron, 35 kilometres northeast of Sarnia.

The anniversary marks the deadly confrontation between unarmed protesters and Ontario Provincial Police, members of the First Nation.

The dispute over territory dates back to 1942, when the Canadian government expropriated land belonging to the First Nation to build a military base called Camp Ipperwash. Sixteen families were relocated, including their houses.

After the war, some of the land became Ipperwash Provincial Park while the rest remained a military base.

The band tried for years to get the land back, saying it contained a sacred burial ground. While that claim was disputed, Camp Ipperwash does contain a cemetery with graves belonging to First Nations people.



Two protesters stand by a barricade near the entrance to Ipperwash Provincial Park, near Ipperwash Beach, Ont., on Sept. 7, 1995. (Moe Doiron/Canadian Press)

By 1993, frustrated that the land still hadn't been returned, members of the First Nation began occupying Camp Ipperwash — even though the military was still using the land to train cadets. The military finally withdrew from the land in 1995.

On Sept. 4, 1995, a group of about 30 people from the First Nation marched in and began occupying Ipperwash Provincial Park as well. Two days later, an unarmed protester named Dudley George was killed by an OPP sniper during a raid on the protesters' camp.

George, 28, became the "first aboriginal person to be killed in a land-rights dispute in Canada since the 19th century," according to the commissioner who led a subsequent inquiry into his death. Acting OPP Sgt. Kenneth Deane was eventually charged with criminal negligence causing death, but resigned from the force and never served time.

Money to be transferred in coming months



Dudley George, shown in this 1993 photo, was shot and killed when police fired on First Nations protesters occupying Ipperwash park. (Tony Pitts/Port Huron Times Herald/Canadian Press)

Now that community members have accepted the deal, the \$95 million will be transferred to the First Nation within six months, according the band's newsletter. Camp Ipperwash will also be returned to the First Nation, but Ipperwash Provincial Park isn't part of the deal. It's already in the process of being

transferred to the First Nation though it's currently "co-managed" by the province.

Some of the settlement money will be put in trust and used to build a new community on the returned land, but some of the money will be distributed to community members. The Kettle and Stony Point First Nation has 2421 members, 1324 of whom live on reserve.

Band members will receive \$5,000 each, with community elders receiving \$10,000 each. Descendants of people who lived on the land before it was expropriated will receive \$150,000 each.

If the community members reject the deal, chief and council says they'll have to take the federal government to court at their own expense — a process that could take years.

In an email statement, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada said the proposed settlement would "resolve all outstanding issues regarding the former Camp Ipperwash lands" but wouldn't provide specifics of the deal.

Kettle and Stony Point First Nation declined CBC News' request for an interview but said that a statement would be released sometime after voting closed on Friday.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/ipperwash-1.3233013>

Nunavut government makes small donation to help Syrian refugees

"Inuit societal values guide us to serve and to provide for those in need"

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, September 18, 2015 - 4:30 pm



The Nunavut legislative mace is borne by carved figures, who bear the mace's weight. (FILE PHOTO)

Nunavut is stepping up to help with the hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing Syria.

“The Government of Nunavut is responding to the Syrian refugee crisis by contributing \$25,000 to the Canadian Red Cross,” Premier Peter Taptuna said Sept. 17 in a statement.

Taptuna said according to his government's mandate, Sivumut Abluqta, "we strive to keep families healthy and build resilient communities."

"In times of great need, our community extends beyond Nunavut's borders," Taptuna said.

The GN also responded to the calls for help following the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the 2010 Haiti earthquake, the 2013 Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, as well as the Nepal earthquake this past April.

"Inuit Societal Values guide us to serve and to provide for those in need. Today, we help Syrian refugees who have been forced from their homes and homeland. I encourage all Nunavummiut to help Syrian refugees, however they can. On behalf of all Nunavummiut, I extend our thoughts and prayers to all those affected by this mounting human tragedy," Taptuna said.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavut_donates_money_to_help_syrian_refugees/

Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, Vuntut Gwitchin and Nacho Nyak Dun sign accord

First Nations pledge to work together to promote development on their terms

[CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 18, 2015 5:53 PM CT Last Updated: Sep 19, 2015 6:01 PM CT



Chiefs representing three First Nations in northern Yukon signed a sustainable development agreement in Dawson City Thursday. (Submitted)

A new agreement between Yukon's three northern first nations aims to ensure sustainable development on their traditional territory.

The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, Vuntut Gwitchin and Nacho Nyak Dun signed the North Yukon First Nations Inter-Governmental Accord in Dawson City Thursday.

Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in chief Roberta Joseph says the accord will help ensure First Nation rights under the umbrella final agreement are respected.

"We need to ensure that activities in our traditional territories are conducted in an environmentally sustainable way to ensure that our traditions and our values remain intact," Joseph said Friday.

Joseph says under the agreement the three First Nations will push for changes to territorial and federal legislation that affect their land claims. The goal, she said, is for the three nations to benefit from development on their terms.

"These resources have sustained us for generations," said Vuntut Gwitchin chief Roger Kyikavichik. "The alliance between the northern nations is a significant step forward. We will work together to protect and preserve our renewable and non-renewable resources for future generations."

Joseph says industry should not consider the accord a barrier to development, saying the First Nations are simply protecting their interests.

"I don't feel that anybody should look at this as a hurdle," she said.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/yukon-first-nations-accord-1.3234848>

First Nations youth to take the lead on community safety



A group of First Nations youth were in London recently taking part in a conference aimed at empowering boys and girls to understand healthy family relationships and promote safety in their communities.

London Community News
By [Sean Meyer](#), Sep 21, 2015

Healthy relationships, traditional teachings and community safety might not be unique issues, but for First Nations leaders across Ontario, the first step towards solutions will surely be found among their youth.

With that in mind the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians (AIAI) brought a group of First Nations youth to London last week for the Raise Her Up Gathering. Hosted by AIAI, the conference aimed to empower boys and girls to understand healthy family relationships, as well as promote safety in their communities.

Stemming from the national tragedy of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, AIAI Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish said the leadership of the member nations felt there was a need to move forward with ending violence in their communities.

But overall, she added, there is also a problem with missing and murdered men and boys as well. And so, the question to be asked is how to best deal with the underlying issues.

“We need to get back to our traditional healthy relationships with each other where both males and females were on equal basis, were partners, shared things, no one was superior to the other,” Stonefish said. “We found, in order for us to make that change, we have to start providing an educational awareness to our young people saying violence is not an acceptable behaviour.”

Stonefish said the 30 youth at the conference, ranging in ages from 12 to 18, were chosen by the member nations and were taken through various cultural workshops, including moccasin making, medicine walks, creation stories, drumming and personal safety.

John McDonald, owner of Threat Ready — which designs training for corporations to recognize and mitigate the risks associated with workplace violence — was among those delivering presentations.

Stonefish praised McDonald, who is also a constable with the London Police Service, for helping the youth understand the need to be more aware of their surroundings.

For example, at one point McDonald asked the youth how many doors were in the room they were in. Half of the youth in the room said there were two doors, even though there were actually four.

McDonald said that’s just one example of how people — youth and adults alike — need a greater awareness of their surroundings.

“Without terrifying the young people, I gave them examples that got them thinking they can do more than they might think. We talked about what people do to excel in critical situations,” McDonald said. “I’m kind of a storyteller when I teach, which is very strong

in the native community. They were extremely receptive because I customized it for them.”

McDonald drew on examples including 9/11, recent crime in London, and other global emergencies to teach the youth about real world survival skills.

One of the exciting things for him personally, McDonald said, was watching the kids lean forward, getting engaged in the discussion.

The goal, he added was to leave them with “a few more tools in the toolbox,” which he believes they did.

For Stonefish, her hope is the youth will be inspired to address violence where they find it.

If someone is using violence among their peer group, for example, they can step in and say stop. Not to transfer the aggression, but be able to say that’s not acceptable behaviour.

“The biggest thing is to let them know that, yes, they are young people, they should be having a good time, enjoying life,” Stonefish said. “But there will be a day that they become an adult and will have roles and responsibilities as a member of a nation, a community, as a member of a family and as an individual. We want them to be prepared.”

Direct Link: <http://www.londoncommunitynews.com/community-story/5843562-first-nations-youth-to-take-the-lead-on-community-safety/>

Order of Nunavut appointments named for 2015

Tagak Curley, William Lyall and Father Robert Lechat will be sworn in this fall

[CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 21, 2015 5:56 AM CT Last Updated: Sep 21, 2015 5:56 AM CT



Tagak Curley served in the Nunavut Legislative Assembly from 2003 until 2014.

Tagak Curley, William Lyall and Father Robert Lechat are this year's inductees to the Order of Nunavut, legislative assembly speaker George Qulaut announced Friday.

"Tagak Curley and Bill Lyall have both made significant contributions to Nunavut as elected representatives and business leaders," Qulaut said in a news release.

"As a life-long resident of Igloolik, I can personally attest to the esteem in which Father Lechat is held for his commitment to the well-being of Inuit and our language."

Curley was a longtime staple of Nunavut politics, serving as an MLA and cabinet minister in the Nunavut legislative assembly from 2003 until 2014. He also served in the Northwest Territories legislative assembly from 1979 to 1987.

Before that, he was the founding president of the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, the forerunner to the national Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. He has also worked in the private sector.

Lyall has served on the board of Arctic Co-operatives Limited and the Nunavut Trust. He was a member of the first fully-elected Council of the Northwest Territories in 1975 (which was referred to as the legislative assembly after 1976) and served on the Nunavut Implementation Commission.

Both Curley and Lyall are members of the Order of Canada.

Originally from France, Lechat is a Catholic priest with the Oblates of Mary Immaculate who spent more than 50 years in parishes across the North, including 25 years in Igloolik and Hall Beach. He's also known for helping preserve and promote Inuktitut.

The three will be invested into the Order of Nunavut at a ceremony later this fall, to be presided over by newly-named Nunavut Commissioner Nellie Kusugak, who was sworn in last week.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/order-nunavut-2015-1.3236199>

Aboriginal Crime, Justice & Law Enforcement

Aboriginal culture front and centre as lawyer Estella Charleson is called to the bar (with video)

By Kim Pemberton, Vancouver Sun September 19, 2015

VANCOUVER — Estella Charleson isn't the first aboriginal lawyer to be called to the bar in the Great Hall of the B.C. Supreme Court, but she was the first to do it Hesquiaht style.

Forsaking the traditional court attire of a barrister's black gown, white wing collar shirt, tabs and waistcoat, which was worn by 181 other lawyers in the Call and Admission Ceremony on Thursday, the 31-year-old from the Hesquiaht First Nation chose to wear regalia from her own tradition.

Charleson was dressed in a fur-trimmed, yellow cedar shawl adorned with abalone shell buttons and eagle feathers, and a native cedar hat. She also wore a dress bearing her family's crest of a goose.

"It's incredibly important to me to represent where I come from and be a symbol of opportunity and hope. And it's important for the legal profession to make space for who I am," said Charleson, who works for JFK Law Corporation in Vancouver, specializing in aboriginal law.

"I've grown up in a Canadian society that has enacted policies to get rid of a culture and a way of life. Understanding the legal history of this colonization, its become even more important to me to represent my culture and indigenous identity."

Her parents, Karen and Stephen Charleson, were at the ceremony, travelling from their off-the-grid home in Ayyisaqh, northwest of Tofino, where they are one of only two families still living in the traditional Hesquiaht territory there.

Charleson was raised, along with five siblings, on the oceanside reservation of Hot Springs Cove, accessible only by boat and which had no power or telephone service when she was growing up. There were about 100 people living there in Charleson's youth, but that has since been reduced to around 40 people, she said.

In order to get her high school education, Charleson left her community at age 12 and lived on her own at a boarding school in Shawnigan Lake — an experience she described

as a “huge culture shock.” She returned home after graduating, but a turning point came at the age of 21 when she decided to go to university to become a lawyer.

“I remember hearing the logging trucks on the land. It was devastating to know logging was happening in our territories and I was powerless to do anything about it. I was inspired to go back to school,” she said.

Her father said Charleson’s family and everyone at home is incredibly proud of her for becoming a lawyer, especially knowing she plans to work for First Nations people.

“I know she has a lot of strength inside and confidence. She’s learned from listening and watching at home,” he said.

“Last summer, she gathered all the cedar she needed herself (for her ceremony attire) and put it all together beside the creek where the fish flow. Seeing that dedication and preparation is the same she will bring to doing her job. She knows a lot of her history and a lot of things we need to fix.”

Charleson said the cedar for her shawl and hat was gathered from a tree near her parent’s cabin, and was harvested in the traditional way her ancestors have been doing it for generations.

“We were raised with such a strong connection to where we come from,” she said.

“Considering where I come from I feel an enormous amount of gratitude. It overwhelms me to think about everything that has happened in my life compared to my father’s lifetime. In the space of one generation, where my father suffered overt racism and active attempts to destroy our culture to me becoming a lawyer.”

According to the B.C. Law Society, there are 11,153 practising lawyers in British Columbia, of which 2.3 per cent are aboriginal, First Nations or Metis.

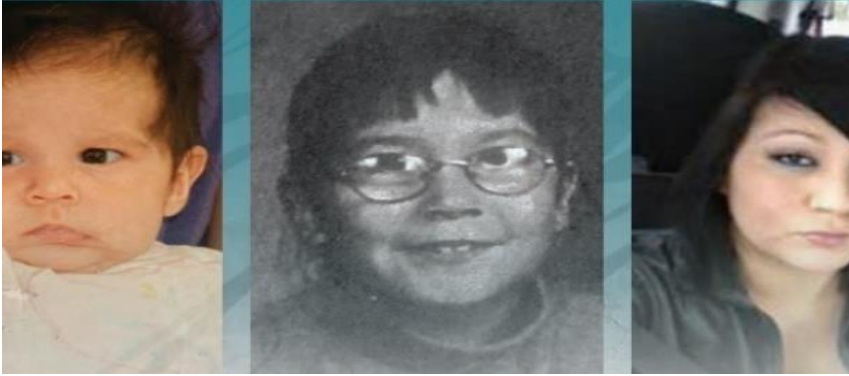
Direct Link:

http://www.vancouversun.com/technology/Aboriginal+culture+front+centre+lawyer+Estella+Charleson+called+with+video/11372515/story.html?_lsa=d8b6-9fcb

Death of B.C. aboriginal teen Paige under RCMP investigation

Child welfare legislation makes it an offence not to report incidents where child needs protection

By Jason Proctor, [CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 18, 2015 12:10 PM PT Last Updated: Sep 18, 2015 12:10 PM PT



RCMP are probing the death of Paige, a 19-year-old who died of a drug overdose after a troubled life on Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. (Representative for Children and Youth)

RCMP have launched a potentially groundbreaking investigation into care workers who dealt with an aboriginal teenager whose tragic death sparked calls for an overhaul of the social services system.

B.C.'s representative for children and youth, Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, says police are investigating allegations detailed in [her report](#) on the death of Paige.

The 19-year-old died after a childhood spent in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, exposed to constant violence and neglect.

Paige was taken to hospital or detox at least 17 times after being found unconscious or incoherent; she changed schools 16 times; and she featured in more than 40 police files, mostly for public intoxication.



Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, B.C.'s representative for children and youth, says she hopes a police investigation into breaches of child welfare legislation might be a "turning point". (CBC)

But despite her contact with health-care workers, police and social workers, many of the incidents went unreported to the Ministry of Children and Families.

B.C.'s Child, Family and Community Services Act makes it an offence not to report a child in need of protection.

"It is important for me to know that the police are taking this section seriously," said Turpel-Lafond.

"I just welcome the fact that there is an investigation. It sends a very strong message out to everyone in the system that this duty is a serious duty."

'This may be a turning point'

Under Section 13 of the child welfare legislation, failure to report a child in need of protection is an offence punishable by a fine of \$10,000 or up to six months in jail.

But Turpel-Lafond said there has never been a prosecution under the act.

"This may a turning point," she said.

Paige has several serious health problems, including Marfan syndrome, a condition that left her legally blind without her glasses, in need of medication she could not afford and a requirement for continuing cardiac care.

Turpel-Lafond called her investigation into Paige's life one of the most troubling her office had ever conducted. She called for an end to the [practice of housing aboriginal children](#) in the Downtown Eastside.

"Not only did she live in this abject squalor," Turpel-Lafond said. "But my report said that possibly we actually hastened her demise by the very sad state of our social care system."

Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs president Grand Chief Stewart Phillip says native leaders wrote to police after Turpel-Lafond's report demanding to know why charges had not been laid in relation to Paige's death.



Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs Grand Chief Stewart Phillips says native leaders asked police why charges hadn't been brought in Paige's death. (CBC)

"I'm really pleased to hear that they have actually initiated an investigation into this tragic matter," he said.

At the time Turpel-Lafond's report was released, B.C. Minister of Children and Family Development Stephanie Cadieux said she was "horrified" by the allegations, but defended the actions of ministry staff.

Cadieux wasn't available for comment. A ministry spokesperson said they would "cooperate fully" with police agencies.

NDP opposition leader John Horgan says an RCMP investigation into the "mishandling of an individual's life" is a continuing theme with the department.

"I believe certainly we can do better than this," he said. "And that's the expectation of the public."

As a result of the report, Cadieux said government would establish a rapid-response team model for youth on the Downtown Eastside.

The ministry plans to report on its response to Turpel-Lafond's report by the beginning of October.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/death-of-b-c-aboriginal-teen-paige-under-rcmp-investigation-1.3234158>

Mi'kmaq police officer on P.E.I. keen to connect police, native people

[Jim Day](#)

Published on September 19, 2015



Published on September 18, 2015

Zachary Gould's instructors say he has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to becoming a police officer. The 21-year-old graduate of the Atlantic Police Academy wants to build a stronger relationship between police officers like himself and his First Nations community.

Zachary Gould, a 21-year-old graduate of the Atlantic Police Academy, determined to bridge the gap

Zachary Gould wants to be more than a cop who simply polices the community.

The 21-year-old graduate of the Atlantic Police Academy is determined to connect with the community, most notably the aboriginal community.

Gould has had unique life-long exposure to the often fractious relationship between law enforcement and First Nations peoples.

As a Mi'kmaq, he grew up on the Scotchfort reserve with the Abegweit First Nation.

His father, Joe, retired after serving more than 20 years as an RCMP officer.

Gould and his two brothers moved around a fair bit with dad getting stationed in Summerside, Charlottetown and various locales in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

Along the way, Gould clearly was influenced strongly by his father's approach to policing.

Joe says he became a cop to "bridge the gap" between police and the aboriginal community.

"When I was young, the relationship was not that strong," says Joe, who did not want to elaborate.

So Joe worked to mend fences. He did a great deal of policing on reserves, emphasizing to the residents that he wanted to work with them, not against them.

“It’s just about treating everybody equally and showing every one respect,” he says.

“They respect the person more so than the uniform.”

Zachary is determined to apply that same philosophy to his own career as a cop.

He sees the value in a community-based approach to policing, in helping First Nations peoples with the underlying problems behind criminal activity, whether theft, assault or any number of other offences.

“I always wanted to help people,” he says.

In the summer of 2013, he worked as a youth leader at the Adventure Group, where he was responsible for the care and supervision of children aged six to 12.

He is just one of those people that stand out. Rick Blouin, an inspector with the Atlantic Police Academy

He recently signed up as a volunteer to coach with the Mi’kmaq Confederacy of P.E.I. Aboriginal Sports Circle — an initiative that works to increase grassroots participation in sport for aboriginal people in the province.

He is most keen about the prospect of making a difference — just like his father did — as a police officer.

His desire to become a cop was well reflected in the effort he put forth at the Atlantic Police Academy.

Instructors picked Gould as the best all-round cadet, earning him the prestigious Hood Crossman Memorial Award.

“Zachary has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to becoming a police officer,” says Betty Gordon, an employment services counsellor with the Mi’kmaq Confederacy of P.E.I.

“His stated objective was to not only graduate from the Police Academy but to participate in the training to the best of his ability.”

Rick Blouin, an inspector with the Atlantic Police Academy, says Gould presented himself very well throughout the program, earning the respect of his peers.

“He is just one of those people that stand out,” says Blouin.

Joe says he was proud, but not surprised, to see his son place top of the class at the Atlantic Police Academy.

He says the young man has the right attributes, not least of which is common sense, to excel in his chosen field.

“He’s a good kid; a really good person,” says Joe.

“He’s going to be a good police officer.”

Direct Link: <http://www.theguardian.pe.ca/News/Local/2015-09-19/article-4282431/Mi%20rsquo%3Bkmaq-police-officer-on-P.E.I.-keen-to-connect-police,-native-people/1>

Raise-a-Reader: Program teaches aboriginal children to read

Importantly, they learn in a culturally supportive environment why reading is important

By Brian Morton, Vancouver Sun September 21, 2015



Cheryl Havens, an aboriginal elder who reads to children in the Aboriginal Parents As Literacy Supporters (APALS) program in Abbotsford with young would-be reader Blake.

Cheryl Havens knows full well the importance of literacy for children.

The 62-year-old aboriginal elder Havens, who reads stories to children in the Aboriginal Parents As Literacy Supporters program in Abbotsford, has seen the results first hand.

“I’d read stories to the little ones,” said Havens, who participated in the program, referred to as APALS, at the community aboriginal centre.

“We’d pick out the books and plan the activities for the APALS session. I’d bring puppets and different things to help the children to talk about points in the book just to keep them engaged. And (the program) encouraged the children to talk to their parents about things we talked about.

“My own grandson would come to the sessions (and) when I’d have the book at my place, he’d say ‘oh Grandma, that’s the story book you read when we were at the story place.’ And he’s not even three yet.

“It’s absolutely having an impact,” added Havens, who started reading to groups of five or six children, but saw the numbers grow to about a dozen. “And they’d want to read more books that are in the library.”

In consultation with elders and other aboriginal community leaders, the APALS program — which is supported by Raise-A-Reader funding — has been adapted for aboriginal communities as a play-based, culturally responsive family literacy program that gives parents and caregivers new strategies to support their preschool and kindergarten-aged children’s learning.

The result? APALS, where children learn to develop language and literacy abilities, with their parents’ support.

Sharon Crowley, literacy outreach coordinator for Literacy Matters Abbotsford, said feedback from the APALS program, which began in January with monthly sessions to May, has been positive.

One parent noted that she hadn’t understood the importance of reading to their child, especially at bedtime.

“It’s a program that introduces to families the importance of literacy and the importance of sharing books and pre-literacy skills with your child, what kind of things you should do to help your child be prepared for reading and writing,” said Crowley, noting that half a dozen families were involved in the recent APALS program.

“One of the important things that happens each session is the child will be read a story and in our case we have an elder that is reading the story to the child. And the child will then get to work with that story in various ways as we move on. We have the story time and at that time the parents are in a room where we talk about different aspects of literacy, the importance of having books around, repetition of stories, what kinds of things children get out of reading a story, holding them on your lap and reading to them, and how important that is to brain development, just that connection.”

Crowley said the program is great with all families, not just aboriginal families.

“It’s important because it helps the families understand the importance of reading to their children and what they can do to enhance the child’s experience to make this richer for

them, how you can extend on a story, how you can bring everyday things out. Looking at cereal boxes, going to the grocery store, driving down the road, word games you can play, all kinds of things that will help aboriginal children and other children as well in their literacy skills before they start school and as they start school.”

PALS was developed in 1999 by Fiona Morrison, director of family literacy and early learning at 2010 Legacies Now, and Jim Anderson, a professor at the University of B.C.

Over time, PALS has been implemented in many communities and school districts throughout British Columbia, expanding from four schools in Langley and Vancouver to over 250 locations across the province today.

Direct Link:

http://www.vancouversun.com/literacy/raiseareader/raise+reader+program+teaches+aboriginal+children+read/11376985/story.html?_lsa=d8b6-9fcb

Young girl recovering after alleged attack on northern Ontario First Nation

Police investigating after girl, 5, from Kasabonika Lake First Nation found severely injured

[CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 21, 2015 5:08 PM ET Last Updated: Sep 21, 2015 5:08 PM ET



Police say a 5-year-old girl is recovering in hospital in London, Ont., after an alleged assault on the Kasabonika Lake First Nation on September 16.

"We are currently investigating an incident in Kasabonika where a young child was found to have suffered injuries from an assault involving other youth," says Sgt. Jackie George, speaking from the Nishnawbi-Aski Police Service's Thunder Bay detachment.



The Kasabonika Lake First Nation is located 448 km north of Sioux Lookout and is only accessible by air or winter road. (Google)

"That investigation is ongoing, so no other details can be released at this time."

Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service police operates in 35 Ontario First Nations, including Kasabonika Lake, which is located 448 kilometres northeast of Sioux Lookout.

Around 900 people live in the community, which is only accessible by air or winter road.

The extent of the little girl's injuries isn't known but friends of her family say she's already undergone four surgeries related to the attack. CBC cannot identify her because she is a minor.

People have been raising money to help the girl's family, with donations being collected in several communities, including the Wunnumin Lake First Nation, Muskrat Dam First Nation and at the Shibogama First Nations Council office in Sioux Lookout, Ontario.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/young-girl-recovering-after-alleged-attack-on-northern-ontario-first-nation-1.3237513>

Nunavik's top cop wants to build trust

Police need to be part of the community, new chief says

SARAH ROGERS, September 22, 2015 - 6:59 am



KRPf chief Michel Martin, right, sits down with officer Sammy Snowball, one of the force's few Inuit members. "They're aren't many, but we have a few very good Inuit police officers," Martin said. "And they'll take over in the future." (PHOTO BY SARAH ROGERS)

KUUIJUAQ — Nunavik's new police chief says he wants to bring stability to the Kativik Regional Police Force and build a stronger sense of trust between its officers and the communities they serve.

Michel Martin was appointed as KRPf chief and director of public security for the Kativik Regional Government [last June](#).

From the window of his Kuujuaq office, Martin admires Nunavik's police headquarters and notes how much it's grown since the KRPf was established in 1996.

Martin, now 62, has a lengthy career in policing, including time with the RCMP at the United Nations, although most of his career was spent with the Sûreté du Québec in Montreal, where he began his career as a police officer in the 1970s.

He worked in a number of roles, from patroller to investigator and detachment chief.

In the early 1990s, Martin spent four years as an inspector for the SQ's northern program, which oversaw policing in Nunavik before the KRPf was created.

In those days, Martin said the police stations that special constables worked out of were basic trailers divided into three sections: an administrative office, a holding cell and a transit section furnished with a bunk bed.

"We've come a long way," Martin laughs.

Back then, policing in the region saw a high turnover, with special constables frequently coming and going.

That part hasn't changed for the modern-day KRPf, he acknowledges.

But it's his intention to change that, and the way the force's members interact with the communities they work in.

"I need to focus on stability," he said. "We see a big turnover. And it takes months to get to know the community, the work."

But it's not just "being there," he acknowledges, it's also about building a sense of trust. Martin knows Nunavimmiut have a strained relationship with their justice system, for which police are the first point of contact.

Martin said that the force's budget, which is attached to short-term funding agreements with the federal and provincial governments, has often forced the KRPF to hire short-term or part-time officers.

His hope is to change that, and bring in more permanent officers who can develop a positive presence where they are stationed.

"Police need to open up the channel of communications," he said. "They need to be part of the community. This is something we've asked our members to do."

For example, police officers in Kuujuaq serve breakfast at the local school, Martin said. If officers visit their local health centres regularly, he says, they can get to know people as first responders and understand other issues facing the community.

Building stability and trust has a lot to do with attracting more Inuit officers to the force, too, as "they'll take over in the future," he said.

Martin himself has committed to travel the region and visit each of the communities, but he acknowledges that this isn't enough to earn the trust of Nunavimmiut.

"It's the local representatives who need to be the focus," he said.

At 62, Martin himself is clear that he won't be in Nunavik for many years to come.

"I'm not here for 10 years, but I'm here to prepare the next generation," he said.

"The territory is the size of France, and you have 80 officers in 14 different communities. Managing all that, from a distance, isn't easy."

While heading up Quebec's northernmost police force, Martin also hopes to take on the violent crime and substance abuse that grip parts of the region.

"We know for a fact that less alcohol means less crime," he said.

Martin said KRPF officers must also be prepared to deal with the number of high-risk situations involving guns — shootings or hostage situations — which are often fueled by alcohol.

“When it happens, [KRPF] are the first to arrive,” he said, noting it can sometimes take 24 hours before the SQ’s SWAT team arrives.

Because KRPF officers only carry pistols, Martin says he’s working to get officers access to higher-powered rifles, so they’re in a better position to protect communities in those hostile situations.

When a gunman is barricaded in residence, an officer positioned somewhere outside the home may not be able to return fire with their pistol.

“It’s really a last resort but we need to have [rifles] in extreme events,” he said. “We’d like to go the opposite way and use fewer arms, but we have to be prepared to protect citizens.”

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunaviks_top_cop_looks_to_build_trust/

Bella Coola woman says Mounties threatened to seize her kids

By Geordon Omand The Canadian Press, September 24, 2015 10:50 pm



BELLA COOLA, B.C. – A First Nations woman from British Columbia's central coast is suing the province after two Mounties allegedly threatened to seize her three young children if she didn't let them search her vehicle for marijuana and crack cocaine.

Kimberly Mack appeared in provincial court in Bella Coola Thursday asking to be compensated \$15,000 for what she alleges was an illegal search that failed to turn up any drugs.

"When I meet up with the cops now I feel a lot of anger," said Mack in an interview. "When I think they can get away with so much I feel angry towards them.

"I would just like an apology. That's my main thing."

RCMP Cpl. William Wallace, Const. Nick Jenkins and B.C.'s attorney general are named in the lawsuit.

A notice of civil claim states Mack was driving back to Bella Coola on May 28, 2010, with friends and family from a potlatch in Vancouver, when she parked outside a grocery store close to home for a washroom break.

Acting on an anonymous tip, police pulled alongside the vehicle and asked Mack for permission to search her vehicle, the notice states.

"They said, 'Kim, if you do not let us search your van we will get the (Ministry of Children and Family Development) involved. We'll get the dogs to search your van if you're not going to help us,'" said Mack in an interview. "I felt that I had to say yes to them."

The notice states the officers arrested Mack in front of her eight-, four-year-old and 15-month-old children and searched the entire van, even tearing off the vehicle's panelling.

"I was scared," she said, about the public search. "I felt embarrassed. Very embarrassed."

Mack said she later lost customers from her home-based convenience store and kept her eldest daughter out of school for a month, until life returned to normal.

"I didn't even want to walk into the grocery store," she added.

The RCMP and the province's Ministry of Justice and Attorney General said they couldn't comment because the case was before the court.

The ministry also referred questions to the federal Department of Justice because the RCMP was involved in the case.

Doug King, a Pivot Legal Society lawyer, is representing Mack and her co-plaintiff, Demi King.

He said they made a conscious decision to try the case in Bella Coola circuit court and not in a larger city, such as Vancouver.

“The heart of the case is about small communities — especially aboriginal communities — and how they’re policed by the RCMP,” he said. “This is really a case about a family that was totally innocent and had their life turned upside down.”

The police allegedly didn’t have a warrant, despite having ample time to secure one, said King.

Mack said she wasn’t read her rights, either.

King said he hopes the case highlights the importance of legal mechanisms that keep police accountable.

He said the biggest issue in the case was the officers’ threat to remove Mack’s children, especially given the fraught history that exists between the state and aboriginal communities.

“A threat to take away somebody’s children is not a minor threat,” said King. “Historically, it’s something that’s happened and is a real part of people’s lives in communities like this.”

A date has not been set for the defendants to present their case, but that stage is expected to take place in Vancouver.

Direct Link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2238295/woman-says-mounties-threatened-to-seize-her-kids/>

Aboriginal Education & Youth

RCMP probe B.C. workers who failed to help vulnerable aboriginal teen

THE CANADIAN PRESS September 18, 2015



The child welfare system treated an Aboriginal girl "with professional indifference," from the start of her life with an unstable, addicted mother to her overdose death in the Downtown Eastside, says a damning new report by B.C.'s children's representative. Paige on the bus

VANCOUVER - British Columbia's representative for children and youth confirms an RCMP investigation is underway, following a report about the tragically short life of an aboriginal teenager who died of an overdose in 2013.

Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond issued a report in May about the 19-year-old identified only as Paige, saying the teen had endured a "broken system" characterized by persistent indifference from front-line workers.

At the time, Turpel-Lafond said criminal action would be the likely outcome if a parent offered the same lack of protection from violence and neglect as Paige received from health care and social workers, police, educators and others.

The children's watchdog says she is aware the RCMP has taken over Paige's file and hopes all those involved in her care will be investigated thoroughly.

She says many people worked with Paige but did not report the horrific conditions she suffered.

Provincial legislation says failure to inform the government of a child needing protection is punishable by a fine of up to \$10,000 and six months in jail.

Read more:

<http://www.vancouversun.com/news/metro/rcmp+probe+workers+failed+help+vulnerable+aboriginal+teen/11374014/story.html#ixzz3mPYbk7sm>

Aboriginal issues focus of exchange

by [Karl Yu - Nanaimo News Bulletin](#)

posted Sep 23, 2015 at 1:00 PM

Vancouver Island University has been selected as the site of an educational exchange program by Fulbright Canada.

The non-profit foundation, mandated to select scholars in the U.S. and Canada and set them up for academic exchange, selected the university to host a visiting research chairperson in aboriginal studies based on the university's work related to the effect of residential schools and its support of aboriginal education.

Michael Hawes, Fulbright Canada CEO, said a faculty member from a U.S. post-secondary institution will be selected, via an application process, and will spend a semester at the university engaging the community.

"The idea is they would interact with students, they would give lectures, they would teach classes, they would engage with the community, but we're also hoping this is an opportunity to develop long-term institutional partnerships between VIU and some American universities who are doing similar things."

Ralph Nilson, VIU president, said it will provide an opportunity for recognition of the importance of the First Nations issues on the national agenda.

"When we think about nation building and we think about the aboriginal agenda, as it relates to title and rights, it's such an incredibly important public policy issue in our nation," said Nilson. "This is going to provide us another opportunity to be engaged."

Nilson said the program will initially run for five years, beginning summer or fall semester 2017. The university won't have to spend money on the position, he said.

"What will end up happening, we will be identifying a donor who will help support this and move forward, so we'll be looking for partnerships that'll help us move this forward," said Nilson.

Direct Link: <http://www.nanaimobulletin.com/news/328869671.html>

Human rights ruling on First Nation child welfare case against Ottawa still 'months' away

[National News](#) | September 22, 2015 by [Jorge Barrera](#)



Jorge Barrera

APTN National News

It may be “months” before the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal rules on whether Ottawa discriminates against First Nations children by underfunding child welfare services in First Nation communities.

The Tribunal sent a letter on Sept. 1 to all parties on the case saying unexpected health issues had delayed the human rights body’s decision on a discrimination complaint launched against the federal Aboriginal Affairs department by Cindy Blackstock, who heads the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society, along with the Assembly of First Nations.

“The decision in this matter is of great significance not only to the parties, but for many people across the country. The parties and the public have been patiently awaiting a decision in this matter,” said the letter sent on behalf of the tribunal panel by Dragisa Adzic, the registry officer. “Due to unforeseen circumstances involving health issues, the panel encountered unexpected delays. The panel is hopeful to have a decision released in a few months.”

The letter does not provide details of the health issues.

“I had hoped for an earlier decision for the kids,” said Blackstock, in a statement sent to *APTN National News*. “Health issues are an understandable reason for the delay.”

Blackstock and the AFN launched the human rights complaint in 2007 alleging the federal Aboriginal Affairs department discriminates against First Nation children on the basis of race and national ethnic origin by continuing to underfund child welfare agencies on reserves.

The tribunal has already ruled in Blackstock’s favour on an adjoining [retaliation complaint](#) that was added to the discrimination complaint

The tribunal ruled that Aboriginal Affairs pay \$10,000 to Blackstock for pain and suffering and \$10,000 for the “wilful and reckless conduct” of David McArthur, the

senior special assistant to Chuck Strahl, who was the minister of Aboriginal Affairs at the time. McArthur was chief of staff to Natural Resources Minister Greg Rickford before the writ was dropped triggering the current federal election.

McArthur blocked Blackstock from entering a meeting on Dec. 9, 2009, at the Aboriginal Affairs department building in Gatineau, Que., because she had filed a human rights complaint against the department, the tribunal found.

In a separate case, [the federal privacy watchdog](#) determined that Aboriginal Affairs and Justice Canada officials were spying on Blackstock by gathering her personal information. The Office of the Privacy Commission found that both departments began gathering her personal information in February 2010. The commission found that the departments accessed and copied information from Blackstock's personal Facebook page. The commission ordered the departments to destroy the personal information they collected "to the extent permitted by law."

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/09/22/human-rights-ruling-on-first-nation-child-welfare-case-against-ottawa-still-months-away/>

Aboriginal Health

Inuit Study Adds Twist to Omega-3 Fatty Acids' Health Story

SEPT. 17, 2015



Children in Greenland. A new study found that Greenlanders with Inuit ancestry often have gene variants that help regulate different fats in the body, including omega-3 fatty acids. Credit Alison Wright/Corbis

Carl Zimmer

MATTER

As the Inuit people spread across the Arctic, they developed one of the most extreme diets on Earth. They didn't farm fruits, vegetables or grains. There weren't many wild plants to forage, aside from the occasional patch of berries on the tundra.

For the most part, the Inuit ate what they could hunt, and they mostly hunted at sea, catching whales, seals and fish. Western scientists have long been fascinated by their distinctly un-Western diet. Despite eating so much fatty meat and fish, the Inuit didn't have a lot of heart attacks.

In the 1970s, Danish researchers studying Inuit metabolism proposed that omega-3 fatty acids found in fish were protective. Those conclusions eventually led to the recommendation that Westerners eat more fish to help prevent heart disease and sent tens of millions scrambling for fish oil pills.

Today, at least 10 percent of Americans regularly take fish oil supplements. But recent trials [have failed to confirm that the pills prevent heart attacks or stroke](#). And now the story has an intriguing new twist.

A study published on Thursday in the journal Science reported that the ancestors of the Inuit [evolved unique genetic adaptations for metabolizing omega-3s and other fatty acids](#). Those gene variants had drastic effects on Inuit's bodies, reducing their heights and weights.

[Rasmus Nielsen](#), a geneticist at the University of California, Berkeley, and an author of the new study, said that the discovery raised questions about whether omega-3 fats really were protective for everyone, despite decades of health advice. "The same diet may have different effects on different people," he said.

Food is a powerful force in evolution. The more nutrients an animal can get, the more likely it is to survive and reproduce. Humans are no exception. When we encounter a new kind of food, natural selection may well favor those of us with genetic mutations that help us thrive on it.

Some people, for example, are able to digest milk throughout their lives. This genetic adaptation arose in societies that domesticated cattle thousands of years ago, in such places as Northern Europe and East Africa. People who trace their ancestry to other regions, by contrast, tend to more often be lactose-intolerant.

Dr. Nielsen wondered if the Inuit had a similar evolutionary change when they shifted to a diet made up mainly of meat.

In recent years, he and his colleagues have been collaborating with researchers at the University of Greenland to study Inuit DNA. Originally, they searched for mutations that raise the risk of developing diseases such as [diabetes](#).

But then Dr. Nielsen and his colleagues took a different tack, searching for mutations that might have provided the Inuit with some benefit.

To sharpen the focus of their search, the scientists selected 191 Greenlanders whose ancestry was 95 percent Inuit or greater. (Many Greenlanders can trace some of their ancestry to Europe because of the island's colonization by Denmark.) The researchers looked at the DNA of these people for variations in genes important to metabolism.

"We wanted to scan the genome and ask, where do we find the strongest signals of natural selection?" Dr. Nielsen said.

The researchers found several genetic variants at different locations in the genome that were unusually common in the Inuit, compared with people in Europe or China. Several of these variations occurred within a cluster of genes that direct construction of enzymes called fatty acid desaturases. (The genes are called FADS, for short.)

This discovery was particularly tantalizing, because the scientists knew that these enzymes helped regulate the different fats in our bodies, including omega-3 fatty acids.

Even more intriguing was the fact that one of these gene variants was present in almost every Inuit in the study. It is much less common in other populations: About a quarter of Chinese people have it, compared with just 2 percent of Europeans.

Natural selection is the only known way this gene variant could have become so common in the Inuit. Dr. Nielsen said this adaptation might have arisen as long ago as 20,000 years, when the ancestors of the Inuit were living in the Beringia region, which straddles Alaska and Siberia.

To uncover the effect of this variant gene, the scientists compared the Inuit in their study with others with more European ancestry. Some had inherited a European version of the variant. People with two copies of the Inuit gene had different blood levels of fatty acids than people without them, the researchers found.

It's possible that with so much extra omega-3 in their diet, the Inuit evolved a way to bring blood levels of fatty acids back into a healthy balance. "It seems that a genetic adaptation has counteracted the high intake of omega-3 fatty acids," said Marit E. Jorgensen, an author of the new study from the University of South Denmark.

The adaptation did more than just change blood levels of fatty acids, the scientists found. Inuit who carried two copies of the variant gene were on average an inch shorter and 10 pounds lighter than those without a copy.

"That's quite extreme," said Dr. Nielsen.

Indeed, it's rare to find a single gene that can influence height and weight so drastically. In recent years, scientists have run a number of large studies pinpointing hundreds of

genes that affect height and weight, but each one played a minuscule role in the variation from person to person.

Those studies missed this influential gene variant because they focused mostly on people of European ancestry. So Dr. Nielsen and his colleagues also investigated how it affects Europeans. As it turns out, the gene variant is linked to a drastic drop in height and weight in that population, too.

The idea that the Inuit adapted to eating fatty food was very plausible, said Anthony G. Comuzzie, a geneticist at the Texas Biomedical Research Institute in San Antonio who was not involved in the study. But he cautioned that natural selection might not have favored the FADS variant but a neighboring, as yet unknown piece of DNA that conferred evolutionary advantages.

As that gene spread through the Inuit population, the FADS variant might simply have been passed down with it.

Dr. Nielsen and his colleagues are planning to investigate the long-term health effects of the gene variants they've found. They may help explain why some of us metabolize fats more effectively than others, and why omega-3s haven't been the heart panacea once hoped.

But the research may also shed light on what sort of dietary changes might benefit the Inuit in particular. "Very soon, these results could be translated into help for people with their dietary choices," Dr. Nielsen said.

Direct Link: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/22/science/inuit-study-adds-twist-to-omega-3-fatty-acids-health-story.html?_r=0

Nunavut's silent killer: Suicide epidemic has ended 479 Inuit lives in the last 15 years

Joe O'Connor 09.23.2015



Qikiqtani General Hospital in Iqaluit. The mural to the far left is of a woman and her two children who were the victims of a murder-suicide a few years ago.

Rex Uttak liked to laugh, especially when his aunt, Mary Ann Uttak, got him going, as she loved to do, because he could get her right back by cracking a joke or doing something silly. Then they would both start laughing until their eyes watered, and they would try to choke back their giggles until the next joke flew.

That was Rex, says his aunt, an 11-year-old boy full of laughter and light. Mary Ann remembers coming home on August 10, 2013 and seeing her nephew and one of his cousin's asleep on a living room couch. She touched his cheek and whispered goodnight. By the next morning Rex was dead. The little boy who liked to laugh had hanged himself.

Rex Uttak was one of 45 Nunavut Inuit to take their own life in 2013, a cascade of tragedies that triggered a special coroner's inquest into the high rate of suicide in the North that convened in Iqaluit on Sept. 14 and concludes Friday.

Since 1999, 479 Inuit have killed themselves in the territory — by hanging, gun, overdose and stabbing — out of a population of about 28,000. To put the numbers in perspective: an Inuit age 15 years and older is 9.8 times more likely to commit suicide than a Canadian living in the south, while the suicide rate among Inuit children, aged 11-14, is about 50 times the national average. Of the 45 suicides in 2013, 12 were women and 33 were men, mostly between the ages of 15-25.

Rex Uttak was the youngest. The oldest was 72.

"Rex was such a happy boy," Mary Ann Uttak says. "We wanted to tell our family's story to try and help others."

We have the highest suicide rate in Canada

Padma Suramala, the territory's coroner, originally hoped that five families impacted by the 2013 suicides would come forward, but only two did in the end. Doing so wasn't easy

for the Uttaks. Mary Ann Uttak fears that the word — suicide — as much as the act, has become rooted in the formative experiences of Inuit young people. Rex Uttak wasn't the first member of his family to kill himself. His older brother, Bernie, committed suicide, as did an aunt. His older sister was murdered.

Dr. Allison Crawford is a psychiatrist who has been working with Nunavut's mental health system for the past decade. She testified during week one of the inquest and explains that, in an environment where suicide has, in essence, become a cultural norm, it is sometimes described as a "contagion."

"I think the word contagion scares people, because people do start to be worried about young people in their family catching suicide — or it to be an epidemic in that way — but suicide doesn't work that way," Crawford says.

"But what we do have evidence of is exposure. Where, if you are a young person and you know someone that has ended their life by suicide, there is an elevated risk that you will in turn end your life by suicide."

This holds true for young people, north and south. A student, say, at a Calgary high school where someone has committed suicide is at greater risk, statistically, of doing the same. Meanwhile many of the factors associated with a young person's suicide — depression, substance abuse, overwhelming feelings of hopelessness and despair — are also common, north and south.

People do start to be worried about young people in their family catching suicide — or it to be an epidemic in that way — but suicide doesn't work that way

But the difference is the magnitude of the problem, and understanding it in a northern context requires digging into the past. Suicide was virtually unheard of among the Inuit historically. RCMP records from 1920 to 1945 documented just 27 suicides throughout the Northwest Territories. Of that number, only one was a youth.

The majority of the cases involved adults with acute physical or mental distress. As one elder explained to the Igoolik Oral History Project, suicide happened "once in a long while...when a person was ill for so long that they got tired of living."

Jack Anawak is 64-years-old and hails from Repulse Bay — the same community as Rex Uttak. Anawak grew up hunting and trapping. By age 17, he had a family and a sled dog team and a traditional male role to fill, where the food that his wife and children ate was the food that he went out and killed.

But in the 1950s, '60s and '70s, the wild, untamed North became a Canadian colonial laboratory. By strokes of the pen the federal government transformed a society of hunters and gatherers into a society of isolated permanent settlements shopping for their groceries at a northern store. Mr. Anawak draws a straight line between the rapid societal

transformation and the muddying of traditional male roles to the suicides of his two brothers, who killed themselves within the span of a few months in 1977.

“I had never been exposed to suicide before that,” he says. “To me, that seemed to be the beginning, and it was usually young men committing suicide.” (It still is young men.)

Many in Anawak’s generation spent time in residential schools. Few talked about it. Instead, they drank, took drugs and raged, as their families and cultural traditions fell apart. Dissolving in a haze of substance, physical and sexual abuse. The cycle of abuse and despair became self-perpetuating, passing from one generation to the next. Children suffered. Suicide rates soared. Here we are today.

“Look, we have the highest suicide rate in Canada,” says Anawak, a former Liberal MP-turned-NDP candidate in the upcoming election. “Our leadership should be shouting about it from the hilltops.

“Let’s make suicide prevention our number one issue.”

Anawak isn’t merely playing politics. One critical aspect in the ongoing suicide epidemic has been the Nunavut government’s colossal failure in dealing with the problem. Several community stakeholders, including the government, the Nunavut land claims organization, the RCMP and a suicide prevention group, came together in 2008 to develop an official suicide prevention strategy for the region.

The strategy was made public two years later. It called for better access to beefed-up mental health services; suicide-intervention training for those on the front-lines of the crisis — police, teachers, community leaders, parents — improving maternal health and childhood opportunities; and mobilizing government departments to “transform the way suicide prevention happens in Nunavut.”

But there was a catch: the plan was not specifically funded. Five years later, much of the strategy remains to be implemented.

“The government deserves to be shamed for this,” Crawford says.

Crawford views the inquest as a positive step forward, an indication that an uncomfortable subject has been pushed to the forefront of the territorial conversation. But some taboos remain intact.

“Child sexual abuse is another huge problem,” she says. “But nobody is willing to talk about it.”

Mary Ann Uttak returned to Repulse Bay after appearing at the inquest. The 27-year-old has a nine, a five and a two-year-old. She worries about them constantly. Sometimes she will speak to her eldest child about life, and how hard it can seem at times, but that things always get better.

When she thinks of her nephew, Rex, she hears his laugh.

“We are trying to be happy,” Mary Ann says. “We are trying to be strong. I don’t know how many people we have lost. We think of the ones who are gone.”

Feel like you need help and want to speak with someone? Call the [Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention](#) at 204-784-4073, [contact a local crisis centre](#) or call Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868 or reach out online at [kidshelpphone.ca](#)

Direct Link:

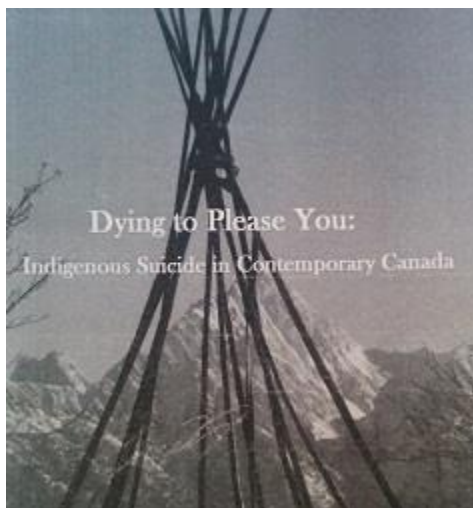
<http://www.montrealgazette.com/news/national/nunavut+silent+killer+suicide+epidemic+ended+inuit/11387479/story.html>

New Research: Resistance to Indigenous Suicide

Haudenausaunee Prof publishes study of suicide, prescribes resistance as cure

by Kerry Coast / September 23rd, 2015

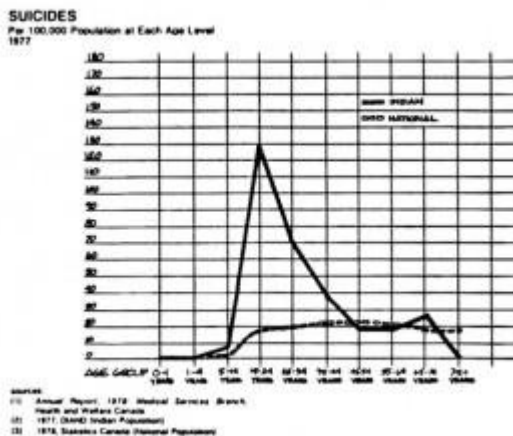
Resistance is the cure for Indigenous suicides. There is nothing “wrong” with Indigenous individuals that was not caused by the relentless violence of ongoing colonization, and therefore the treatment of the fatal condition of dispossession and oppression is to right that basic wrong. That, and an anti-capitalist campaign that will set the humanistic balance of pre-capitalist, or pre-Columbian, economics back in place.



So writes the very qualified lead author of *Dying To Please You: Indigenous Suicide in Contemporary Canada* (Theytus Books, 2015) Dr. Roland Chrisjohn (co-author:

Shaunessy M. McKay), Onyota'a:ka of the Haudenosaunee, who published one of the earliest and most accurate exposés of the prevalence of violence against children in Indian Residential Schools, *The Circle Game*.

That is, there is nothing inherently “wrong” that makes it reasonable to accept that Indigenous individuals commit suicide ten times more often than Canadians, in some age ranges and demographics. This book undoes the western construct of the “Broken Indian,” a term the authors have coined to refer to the mythical inferior savage, the fictional character which the colonizer has invented as explanation for lack of success and excess of self-destruction among Indigenous individuals.



Graph comparing Indian and National suicide levels from 1978 DIAND Annual Report. While this graph is questionable, the trend it depicts is not. And that trend is present today.

Dr. Chrisjohn teams with Shaunessy McKay, Mi'kmaq, to reinterpret theories on suicide. Apparently the study of this phenomenon has not informed programs which have reduced suicide. And when it comes to a “back eddy” of this field, the main focus of their thinking, the authors have analyzed and criticized the professionals’ approach to Indigenous suicide. “...we’re concerned with Native people facing the challenge of unnecessary deaths, of themselves or of others around them. Our goal is to prevent such deaths...”

The authors review the research of non-native psychologists and even self-reflecting ex-RCMP, who pronounce explanations based on the malaise of poverty, poor health, academic failure, drug and alcohol abuse – all considered to be problems which can lead to suicidal behaviour. And all of those writers fail to ask: why is there such a preponderance of these problems in Indigenous communities?

Chrisjohn and McKay adjust the picture to the proper context, by comparing the captive on-reserve Indigenous population of Canada to the situation of concentration camp inmates in Nazi Germany.

Consistent with this parallel, and with the authors' main recommendation, the Jewish inmates who resisted their captors, fought back and attempted to gain control of their camps, had a survival rate ten times that of those who did not resist. Rates of suicide in the camps were otherwise 50 times that of the general German population.

Looking at the Indigenous situation in Canada, the researchers see individuals faced with a choice like jumping from the top of a burning building or being burnt alive. They say the jump is "not a choice but an inevitability."

Canada's working policy ultimatum towards Indigenous Peoples amounts to this inevitability: extinguish inherent rights yourself or see how long you can endure the bonfire of oppression. There is no peaceful mechanism in Canada whereby Indigenous Peoples can engage with the state to resolve the land issues and past harms, even economic sustainability, which does not require the Indigenous party to waive their rights, extinguish themselves as a people, and indemnify Canada. That leaves resistance – or jumping.

What we discover from the authors' analyses of current approaches is that the mainstream *suicidology* treatment of suicide among the oppressed is so desperately hopeless that, according to dominant theories of the causes of suicide, the whole study might soon do itself in.

Hopelessness is considered a great cause of suicide. While this rings true for many people who end their lives rather than carry on inside a stack of barriers, when considering Indigenous suicides that hopelessness cannot be separated from the fact that *another group of people deliberately stacked up and reinforced those barriers specifically to induce that kind of hopelessness!*

Mainstream thinking and theory, courtesy of French sociologist Emile Durkheim's undisputed (until now) diagrams, cannot even locate the influence of extreme over-regulation in the suicidal impulse. Living within the strictures of the Indian Act might be a good example of over-regulation, but Durkheim found in that corner only the types of oppressive daily regimes such as are borne by young husbands trying to support their families, and does not identify oppression within his map of danger zones in social geography. Durkheim, living at the height of French colonization in Northern Africa, may have had a blind spot where oppressive regimes over-regulating native populations are concerned. The area has not, however, been illuminated in the last century-and-a-half of *suicidologists* continuing his theories.

"Capitalism is alienation, alienation is oppression, oppression causes suicide." According to *Dying to Please You*, capitalism became a force once Columbus reached land in the Americas – and provided an exact location where the Pope could approve of pillaging. Once there were multiple levels in the possession of land and extraction of its resources, the wealthy capitalized on the opportunity and an entirely new class of opportunists emerged – on the backs of alienated workers and African slaves in fields the Indigenous were forcibly dispossessed of.

Capitalism alienates the worker, who does a job to produce a result, from the product of his work. The authors conceive a direct link between this economic model and the material alienation felt by the person who is used as a kind of cog in an industrial machine, never owning any part of what they do but renting out their labour to make it go. For this they rely on a little-known early work of Karl Marx: transcription of a journal and study of suicides in Paris, France early in the 19th century. Marx described alienation as “the human condition under capitalism.” It is not a controversial statement to say that Indigenous Peoples have been alienated from their lands and economies; from their work and all they produce. And whatever roles Indigenous individuals play in the Canadian economy would not bridge that fact.

That oppression flows from material and historical alienation is taken as a pre-formed fact. What this means is that if you have no power to control your identity and your role in history; if you cannot own anything, really; if you cannot even keep that which your expert hands or mind creates; then you are being used. You have no choice but to work, to produce – but someone else is keeping you down and they will benefit from your work, or even from your people’s inherent wealth in this case, while you struggle.

Oppression causes suicide, and Indigenous Peoples are oppressed by Canada.

One of the appendices spells that out in details concerning the “Historic Non-Apology” by Prime Minister Stephen Harper to former students of Indian Residential Schools. The essay was released immediately after the 2008 apology and written by a group of seven academics, including Chrisjohn, and accurately anticipated what APTN has just reported: that the Prime Minister’s own speech writer did, at the time, see it as an “attempt to kill the story.”

Dying to Please You is an important tool for people who have lost loved ones to the “burning building” of Indigenous life in Canada. It is a tool which helps understand, and unpack grief, and forgive, and even rally to the resistance. More importantly, this book will stop someone from committing suicide. It will do this either directly, for a reader, or by informing and empowering a friend who stands between someone’s life and death. And instead of dying, that oppressed person will refuse: she will resist.

“We ask that you refuse to die.” So the authors plead in the last line of the book, having too many times suffered the catastrophe that quakes whole communities when a loved one jumps – and understanding the alternative: informed resistance to oppression, and freedom and independence once again.

Quotes from the book:

“Of all the blather we’ve had to read about what is going on in the mind of someone at the moment he or she takes the final step to suicide, the only one that has made sense to us is the person who compared suicide to someone trapped at the top of a burning building, having to make the choice between being burnt alive or jumping to his or her death on the ground below. “Why must there be something going on in one’s mind when

one is driven to the conclusion to jump?,” she asked. We agree; whatever is in one’s mind at that point, if anything, it is not the determinant of a person’s behavior. It is the fire, it is the lack of rescue, it is the unavailability of any alternative that drives the behavior. This is what we wish to say about indigenous suicide: given the situation, it isn’t a choice, it isn’t a thought; it is an *inevitability*. It is the inevitability that relentless oppression produces. It is designed to break us, either by driving us over a literal or metaphorical cliff, or by achieving our surrender. But look back at Table 2. Breaking or surrendering are not our only options. We say: there is informed resistance. One can look past the facade of bogus science and erased history and see the real process in action; and in seeing that, understand how it has come to dominate our situation.

For anyone looking for our therapeutic recommendation: here it is. Become informed.”

The authors appreciate the freedom of “...a rational, fully-informed person’s decision to end his or her life...

“But this is our point. Indigenous people in Canada are *not* fully informed. We are, rather, systematically *mis*-informed about the nature of the forces arrayed against us as individual human beings. ...we say that the human thing to do is to intervene, to get between a person and death, only because it is so highly unlikely that she or he has made her or his decision having all the information. Does the mass of Indians who commit suicide understand that this is a *murder*? Do they understand that the murder is being carried out by people under a facade of helping them? Do they understand that, by assisting them in this murder, they are giving their oppressors exactly what they were attempting to get through the means of their murder?”

“Canada isn’t just trying to kill Native peoples: they are satisfied with some of us killing ourselves, other of us helping keep the great mass of Natives “in line,” and the rest of us taking (by various means) our places on the margins of Canadian society. Creating the Broken Indian — destroyed by ignorance, sex, drink, drugs, and despair, and thus *validating* Canada’s self-aggrandizing, racist narrative of a brown hoard of sub-humans the eurocanadians must rescue, tolerate, and reform — is more than enough.

“But there is a reason to step back from death, because, as we’ve argued, to step back from death gives us the chance to step away from ignorance. To do that is to give ourselves time to work through *all* the reasons we believe we want to kill ourselves; and then, yes, with full information, to complete that act as is our human right. As human beings, we each shall go when we decide it is time for us to go. But if we have the time to learn that we’ve been misled about what is happening to us and why, the opportunity is presented of doing something meaningful before we take that step prematurely.”

How easy it has become for the social scientists of today to do what even the Nazis couldn't bring themselves to do. In truth, does not the history of Jewish suicide during the holocaust, like the histories of suicide in the Arawaks, the Home Children, and the Marshallese Islanders, and countless other oppressed groups, teach us that suicide is in part a *normal human reaction to conditions of prolonged, ruthless domination*? The dominant depiction of suicide in Aboriginal Peoples inhabiting Canada rhetorically neglects these parallels, biasing those trying to come to grips with the phenomenon away from the readily apparent and into esoteric realms. "Models" of Indian suicide are individualistic, relying on supposed internal characteristics instead of looking at the inverted pyramid of social, economic, and political forces impinging on Aboriginal Peoples. Existing explanations blame the victim, finding that they suffer from personal adjustment problems or emotional deficiencies like "low self-esteem" and "depression." None of the existing explanations alleviate the situation by acting or suggesting action against the forces of oppression; they don't even recognize them. The cost-effectiveness of the government's providing perfunctory, end-of-pipe social intervention programs instead of meeting their contractual treaty obligations doesn't surface as an issue.

Kerry Coast is the author of [*The Colonial Present: The Rule of Ignorance and the Role of Law in British Columbia*](#). [Read other articles by Kerry](#).

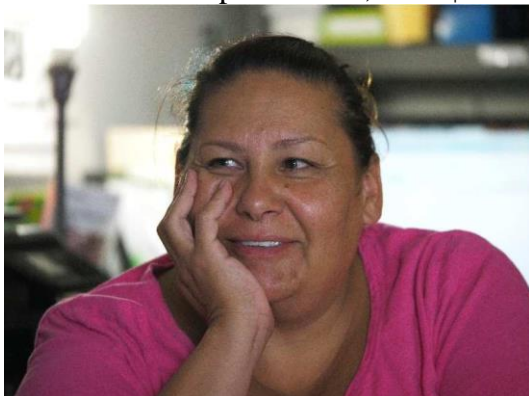
Direct Link: <http://dissidentvoice.org/2015/09/new-research-resistance-to-indigenous-suicide/>

Aboriginal History

Amiskwaciy history series launches in Edmonton city hall

[Gordon Kent, Edmonton Journal](#)

Published on: September 20, 2015 | Last Updated: September 20, 2015 10:00 AM MDT



Karen Bruno is a member of the volunteer Amiskwaciy History Series Committee. Larry Wong / Edmonton Journal

A new program hopes to improve links between Edmonton residents by holding regular presentations about the area's aboriginal history.

"We feel that part of building bridges is through knowledge and education. There's a lot of information out there that isn't widely available," says Karen Bruno, part of the volunteer Amiskwaciy History Series Committee.

"It gives people an opportunity to learn and grow. That's part of reconciliation. It's part of healing."

The eight-member committee was formed last winter as a way to continue the conversation started by the 2014 Truth and Reconciliation Committee gathering in Edmonton.

With help from a city social worker, they've put on three sessions since last spring at different Edmonton libraries. They have each attracted a mostly non-aboriginal audience of 30 to 50 people.

The events have looked at the history of the southside Papaschase reserve, the evolution of the Cree language and its connection to ceremonies, and the controversial background of some local place names. Those places include Oliver, named for early newspaper owner and politician Frank Oliver, who supported Indian residential schools and didn't want aboriginal people living in the city, Bruno says.

The group is officially launching the history series Monday at City Hall.

Presentations, which could involve theatre, art and story telling for children, will be held in libraries monthly starting in October. They'll look at such topics as education, including the Amiskwaciy Academy (Edmonton's aboriginal junior/senior high school) and the history of friendship centres.

Each presentation will be recorded and put on YouTube so, like a TED Talk, they will be available to a wider audience, Bruno says.

"I know from my experience ... when you provide that knowledge and that education, that people start changing their minds. They start realizing there's more to us as aboriginal people ... We have history and lot to offer."

For information on the schedule, email amiskwaciyhistory@gmail.com.

Direct Link: <http://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/amiskwaciy-history-series-launches-in-edmonton-city-hall>

Study on B.C. First Nations stone tools finds glacier brought mountain to man

By Terri Theodore, The Canadian Press Posted: Sep 21, 2015 11:25 AM ET Last Updated: Sep 21, 2015 11:25 AM ET



What remains of a First Nations stone tool artifact from the ancient village site on Galiano Island, B.C. A new study determined volcanic rock was taken right off the beach after being deposited there 12,000 years ago by glacier. The finding dispels a theory that villagers had to leave the site to access better toolstone. (THE CANADIAN PRESS)

First Nations in British Columbia were once believed to have travelled long distances to find prized volcanic rock for tools, but a new study of an ancient village suggests the mountain actually came to them.

Archeologist Colin Grier has been studying the Gulf Island village site at Dionisio Point on Galiano Island for almost two decades, but it wasn't until his team picked up a few dark stones on the beach that they began questioning the theory of travelling for stones to make tools.

The associate professor at Washington State University's anthropology department said the team tested the beach stones, the debris from stone toolmaking at the site and the volcanic rock from Mount Garibaldi over 100 kilometres away on British Columbia's mainland.

The chemical fingerprint matched.

Grier said the finding dispels the theory that the villagers went all the way to Mount Garibaldi between 600 and 1,500 years ago to get the stone for their tools. Instead, the rock came to their beach thousands of years before.

"It was picked right off the local beach, brought there by glaciers, conveniently, 12,000 years ago," he said.

Grier co-authored the study published in the September issue of the *Journal of Archaeological Science*.

It said the volcanic rock was difficult to fashion into a tool, but it kept a better edge and required less retouching during use compared with obsidian or chert, a silica rock.

"We conclude the high-quality tool stones were readily available in secondary glacial till deposits at the Dionisio Point locality," the study said.

Grier said the beach stones — while not the highest quality — made it much more possible for the villagers to be self-sufficient because the material for tools was easily accessible.

"You could go down to the local corner hardware store rather than having to pick up and pack the canoe up and head off to the Super WalMart on the mainland," he chuckled.

That didn't mean the First Nations did not travel at all. In fact, other studies showed they often trekked to other villages on Vancouver Island and the mainland, Grier said.

There is a lot of evidence that many island villagers went to the Fraser River to fish for salmon during the summer.

"The villages they were living in were likely inhabited through the winter, after they had dried all their salmon and bought it back," Grier said.

The Dionisio Point village, part of a protected provincial park and only accessible by boat, is considered one of the best preserved village sites on the entire B.C. coast.

"It's an amazing element of the archeological record of British Columbia and Canada, and really, of the world," said Grier, a Canadian who lives on Galiano when he's not working in Washington state.

The Gulf Islands sit right along the Canada-U.S. border between Vancouver Island and B.C.'s mainland.

Grier said the islands are a treasure trove of archeological sites with new discoveries taking place all the time, giving more hints about what ancient Coast Salish life was like hundreds of years ago.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/study-on-b-c-first-nations-stone-tools-finds-glacier-brought-mountain-to-man-1.3236899>

Aboriginal Identity & Representation

Nunavik school board encourages families to use Inuttitut at home

“We want to keep our language strong”

SARAH ROGERS, September 18, 2015 - 7:00 am



KUUJJUAQ — “Hey fellow Inuit, let’s speak our language!”

That’s the loud and direct message the Kativik School Board is hoping to send to Nunavimmiut as it launches a campaign this week to promote the use of Inuttitut across the region.

The campaign targets students outside of the classroom, but emphasizing the important of using the language at home and in social settings as a way to keep the language alive.

“We’re targeting parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles to make sure they keep talking to their children in Inuttitut,” said Harriet Keleutak, secretary general at the KSB.

“We’re seeing, the last few years, students starting school and not being able to speak the language, even though their parents are Inuit. That was alarming.

“As a school board, we’ll keep teaching Inuttitut, but we can’t do it alone,” she said. “If eventually, five kids out of 10 don’t speak Inuttitut, the teacher would have no choice but to use a second language so they understand.”

The use of social media has many Inuit engaged, but often they are writing in English, or mixing the two languages, Keleutak said.

Educators have noted children starting sentences with “uvanga” — the same way you begin a sentence with “I” in English, she noted.

“So they’re using English grammar [when they speak Inuttitut,] and there are nouns and verbs that are not being used properly,” Keleutak said. “We want to keep our language strong.”

That was one of the major priorities to come from Parnasimautik consultations, where Nunavimmiut [identified the preservation of their language and culture among their top goals.](#)

With 99 per cent of Nunavik Inuit able to carry on a conversation in Inuttitut, Keleutak acknowledges that Inuttitut is strong. The goal, she says, is to enhance it.

To do that, the school board is distributing language promotional materials to its schools and to all Northern Village offices across the region.

The KSB has also reached out to municipalities and asked them to form language or cultural committees if they don't already have them.

The school is also enhancing its own Inuttitut-language curriculum, but updating materials and offering teachers better language training.

The KSB's teaching training program already offers an Inuttitut language component.

Direct Link: http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavik_school/

Mayor Defends Invite List At Racism Summit

Winnipeg, MB, Canada / 680 CJOB - Winnipeg's News & Information Leader

[Julie Buckingham](#)

September 18, 2015 02:21 pm

Two groups are complaining about being left out of the Mayor's One Summit aimed at ending racism.

The Manitoba Metis Federation and the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs both say they were not invited to the two day event.

Mayor Brian Bowman contends everyone was welcome.

"This summit, is open to all people. All Canadians, all Manitobans, all Winnipeggers were invited. You know, ultimately, it's up to each individual who would decide whether or not they wanted to attend," Bowman told reporters.



In a statement, Grand Chief Derek Nepinak calls it baffling the A-M-C would be excluded from a discussion on racial inclusion. You can read his full statement by clicking [here](#).

Meantime, Manitoba Metis Federation says what really is revealing about the Summit is who has not been invited.

“The Manitoba Metis are the largest indigenous group in Winnipeg, the province of Manitoba and arguably the country of Canada. How can racism be addressed when those who are impacted the greatest are not invited to be a part of the conversation and the solution?” asks President David Chartrand of the MMF, “This is just another example of racism by exclusion despite the event being heralded as a national summit on racial inclusion.”

Direct Link: <http://www.cjob.com/2015/09/18/84607/>

Summit tackling racism accused of excluding some aboriginal groups



Guests gather at the grand opening of the Canadian Museum For Human Rights in Winnipeg on September 17, 2014. (John Woods / The Canadian Press)

CTVNews.ca Staff

Published Saturday, September 19, 2015 7:59PM EDT

A conference held in Winnipeg this week to address racism in the city has come under fire after representatives from Manitoba's First Nations and Metis communities say they were left out of the discussion.

The two-day One Winnipeg summit, which was held at the Canadian Museum of Human Rights on Thursday and Friday, was organized after a [Maclean's story](#) in January labelled Winnipeg "Canada's most racist city."

The article was written partly in response to the murder of Manitoba teen Tina Fontaine, whose death made national headlines and re-ignited calls for a national inquiry into Canada's nearly 1,200 missing and murdered aboriginal women.

The sold-out conference drew activists, authors, speakers from Canada's indigenous community and members of the U.S. civil rights movement.

Winnipeg's mayor, Brian Bowman, called the event "one of our most important endeavours in Canada today."

However, David Chartrand, president of the Manitoba Metis Federation, and leaders from the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs say they were not among those invited.

"For the mayor to exclude us boggles my mind," Chartrand said. How do you call it racial inclusion if you don't include everybody?"

Bowman has denied the accusation, saying the summit was open to everyone.

Thursday's event was free of charge and many of the sessions were livestreamed on its website.

Tickets to attend the event on Friday cost \$50, or \$25 for students, which left some community activists to hold their own free discussion outside the venue. One attendee, Saskatchewan native Joey Reynolds, fundraised so he could attend the summit in person.

He was optimistic about the event because change "can happen."

"I believe in faith, Reynolds said. Faith is hope, and hope is opportunities."

The ideas generated at the summit will be used in a report to be issued by city hall early next year.

Out on the city's streets, Kimberly Harris, who is homeless, says she experiences racism every day.

She said instead of congregating at the Canadian Museum of Human Rights, attendees needed a first-hand look at its effects.

"They should come out on the street and watch it," Harris said.

Winnipeg is home to Canada's largest aboriginal community.

Direct Link: <http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/summit-tackling-racism-accused-of-excluding-some-aboriginal-groups-1.2571736>

U of S Professor incorporates First Nations design concepts in engineering classes

Canoes, tipis used as examples of good design

[CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 21, 2015 9:48 AM CT Last Updated: Sep 22, 2015 8:06 AM CT



University of Saskatchewan Engineering professor Sean Maw is incorporating First Nations designs into his classes. (Steve Pasqualotto/CBC News)

When most people think of technology, iPhones and laptops may come to mind. But what about a canoe? Or a longhouse?

That's the question University of Saskatchewan Engineering professor Sean Maw is asking.

This fall, he's using the engineering concepts behind kayaks, tipis and travois in his courses.

"It's long overdue, I think, that we bring in some excellent examples of First Nations history into engineering," he said.

Maw told Saskatoon Morning's Leisha Grebinski that there's a lot that engineers can learn from First Nations design. For example, the designs of boats changed dramatically due to what kind of water conditions were being used and availability of local supplies.

"The design of watercraft across Canada by Canada's indigenous peoples is a wonderful example of design," he said. You look at the canoes in Ontario and Quebec, the kayaks in northern Canada, the dugouts on the west coast and even the bull boats on the prairies, they're all excellent examples of engineering design."

Maw said the examples are incorporated into classes seamlessly, rather than having a specific unit about aboriginal design.

Ultimately, Maw would like to see more academic work done on the history of indigenous design and is working to get that set up at the U of S, with an eye towards creating a text book.

"We're actually looking to recruit a PhD student who will document, as their PhD thesis, the technological history of Canada's first peoples," he said.

Maw is also working with education students to incorporate First Nations concepts into K-12 classes.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/u-of-s-professor-incorporates-first-nations-design-concepts-in-engineering-classes-1.3236892>

Liquor store did not discriminate against Inuk woman, says former owner

Bessie Kahak was refused service at Yellowknife Liquor Shop; cashier suspected her of being intoxicated

By Richard Gleeson, [CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 21, 2015 7:51 AM CT Last Updated: Sep 21, 2015 12:59 PM CT

The former owner of a Yellowknife liquor store accused of discriminating against an Inuk woman has apologized to her, but maintains the store did not refuse to sell her beer because she is Inuk.

At a human rights complaint hearing on Friday, Perry Smith says his store had a policy of "taking the side of the angels" if they had any suspicions a customer was intoxicated.



Bessie Kahak has taken the Yellowknife Liquor Shop to the human rights commission over its refusal to sell her beer last year. (CBC)

Smith said during the time he owned The Liquor Shop — from 2002 to 2015 — the store did more than two million sales transactions. But he added, with sales totalling \$161 million, "we don't have to push the envelope."

He said the policy of not selling to anyone if there was even the slightest suspicion they were intoxicated was bound to upset customers from time to time.

The human rights complaint was filed by Bessie Kahak. She tried to buy two six packs of beer a year and a half ago and was refused service.

Kahak says she was completely sober and had just arrived at the store that Saturday night after grocery shopping.

When she went to the cash register to pay, the cashier said he asked her, "Hello, how are you?" and Kahak responded, "Oh, my husband is outside."

The cashier said when he asked, "Have you had anything to drink?" she responded, "I'm with my husband."

The cashier said he found Kahak's responses evasive and seemed to him to be in a rush to make her purchase. He also said he smelled alcohol on her breath.

The supervising cashier that day said Kahak left quietly, but returned moments later with her husband. She said they were loud and agitated, and Kahak pointed out the Filipino cashier who had denied her service. The supervisor testified that Kahak's spouse said, "If you're going to use those types of people at the till, you should train them properly."

She said she saw their agitation as a sign they were intoxicated.

Women's activist Arlene Hache represented Kahak at the hearing. She suggested the agitation was the result of being racially discriminated against. She argued that the way Kahak's responded to the cashier's questions was a reflection of her Inuit culture.



The former owner of Yellowknife's Liquor Shop told the hearing Friday that staff at the store treated all customers the same. (CBC)

Questioned by Hache, Smith said training cashiers get in how to assess whether a customer is intoxicated doesn't take into account how people of different cultures may respond differently to questions asked at the till. Both the supervisor and Smith said the store treated all customers the same.

Near the end of his questioning, Smith said he wanted to apologize to Kahak. He turned to her and said, "We were just doing our jobs. I'm sorry if we hurt your feelings."

Uneven playing field

Hache said Kahak was at an "extreme disadvantage" during the hearing and through the whole human rights process because she could not find a lawyer to represent her.

Hache said Kahak went to legal aid four times, a local law firm and the human rights commission in an attempt to get a lawyer. She said that's why Kahak did not show up for pre-hearing conferences.

Hache says she only agreed to help Kahak just before the hearing started. She said at that time, Kahak was "in tears and terrified."

She asked the adjudicator to not award costs to Smith, as his lawyer requested.

Douglas McNiven said his client deserves costs because Kahak did not show up for almost a dozen pre-hearing conferences that were held. McNiven also argued that there was no evidence that race played any role in the decision to refuse to sell to Kahak.

McNiven said Smith had also suffered financial damages as a result of media reporting on the case. Smith himself said staff morale suffered for weeks after news reports, in which he refused to comment, were published.

He said he lost an estimated \$1 million in sales because of the bad publicity.

Adjudicator Louis Sebert did not indicate when he would give his decision in the case.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/liquor-store-did-not-discriminate-against-inuk-woman-says-former-owner-1.3236616>

Canadian school test changing after Saskatoon student finds aboriginal stereotype

CKOM / The Canadian Press
September 23, 2015 02:38 PM

SASKATOON - An achievement test used in Canadian schools is being changed after a student in Saskatoon noticed that some of the options in multiple choice questions included negative stereotypes about aboriginal people.

The exam recently given to Grade 10 students in Saskatoon public schools included two questions "where the available multiple-choice options included two incorrect answers which were negative stereotypes about aboriginal people."

School spokesman Rod Drabble says the answers said aboriginal people have a "lack of interest and motivation" and many aboriginals are unemployed.

A student writing the Level 19 test book of the Canadian Achievement Tests, Fourth Edition, told a parent and it was brought to the attention of the school board and division administrators.

Drabble says the school system has stopped using that test until further notice and has notified the Canadian Test Centre.

David Galati, director of operations for the Canadian Test Centre, says the answers will be changed in any Level 19 test books sent out from now on.

"I was surprised and disappointed to see that our internal review of test items during the development of CAT4 did not identify these two test items and replace them before publication," Galati said in an email.

"This is the first time anyone has brought this concern to my attention, but Level 19 is not as widely used as our other test levels."

Galati said the fourth edition of the test was published in 2008 and was field-tested in classrooms across Canada.

It has been used by the Saskatoon public board since 2012.

Chris Scribe, director of Indian Teacher Education Program, said he remembers facing stereotypes within his curriculum when he went to school but was shocked to see that it was still being spread across the country.

"Why are questions like this included on there? Why wasn't it a question about a First Nation doctor and the need (for more doctors) or a success story of that? What is the purpose of having it where they are talking about non-motivation and talking about unemployment and they are talking about lack of funding? It's like, wow, this is still happening in our schools. That was the initial thought."

Scribe said it speaks to a need across the country for more action on indigenous inclusion in the curriculum.

- See more at: <http://www.timescolonist.com/canadian-school-test-changing-after-saskatoon-student-finds-aboriginal-stereotype-1.2067376#sthash.g3Gjrs0E.dpuf>

With nine written versions and two alphabets, Inuit language finally getting much needed makeover

[Tristin Hopper](#) | September 23, 2015 | Last Updated: Sep 24 1:03 PM ET

In the Inuit regions of Labrador, the word "son" is written as "Innik." Cross the border into Arctic Quebec and the word becomes "Irniq." Skip across Hudson Strait onto Baffin Island, and the word is now a series of syllabic symbols that—to non-Inuit—might look like a triangle, a whistle and several elevated squiggles.

It's all the same Inuktitut word. But in the linguistic maze of the Canadian Arctic, the roughly 40,000 speakers of the Inuit language use no fewer than nine different writing systems and two alphabets.

“Linguists have told us Inuktitut is one of the hardest languages to learn as a second language,” said James Eetoolook, vice-president of Nunavut Tunngavik, the corporation governing the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.

And it’s why — after decades of planning — Canada’s Inuit are now hammering out a plan to unite the entire Arctic under a single Roman-lettered language.

“There’s been talk of this for years; it’s not new,” said Jeela Palluq-Cloutier, the Inuit-language coordinator for ITK, the organization representing all Canada’s Inuit.

But it’s only recently that ITK has formed Autausiq Inuktitut Titiraisiq, a task force of eight representatives — two from each of Canada’s four Inuit regions — to figure out a common standard to be understood from Inuvik to Labrador.

CONFUSION OF TONGUES

The difficulty of communicating across the vast distances of the Canadian Arctic resulted in written Inuktitut being developed very differently across neighbouring regions. Here, for instance, is how various Inuit would spell the Inuktitut words for “moon” and “son.”

Moon

Eastern Nunavut: ᑕᓃᐅᓃᐅ

Western Nunavut: Tatqiq

Labrador: TakKik

Arctic Quebec: Tarqiq

Son

Greenland: Erneq = irniq

Labrador: Innik = irniq

Nunavik: Irniq

Nunavut: Irniq or ᐃᓃᓃᐅ

Alaska: Irñiq

Source: Jeannie Arreak-Kullualik

Just last month, the task force made news in the Arctic by recommending the system abandon Inuit syllabics and stick strictly to Roman orthography.

“With language erosion, we have to figure out a better way for young people to read and write in our language,” said Jeannie Arreak-Kullualik, one of two Nunavut representatives on the task force.

Like many Canadian Aboriginal groups, the Inuit had no written language before the arrival of European missionaries. But the size and inaccessibility of Inuit territory meant different churches made contact with different regions at different times.

In the 1700s, Moravian missionaries taught the Labrador Inuit a written language based on the Roman alphabet. On Baffin Island a few decades later, Anglicans were teaching a symbol-based system known as Inuktitut syllabics.

By the time aircraft, snowmobiles and radio communication hit the Arctic, Canada’s Inuit suddenly realized they couldn’t read each other’s Bibles.

Most Southern Canadians are familiar with syllabics, the iconic symbol-based language used on stop signs and public buildings in Iqaluit.

But that version of written Inuktitut is only used in Nunavut and Northern Quebec. Even then, usage varies wildly.

Elders use old syllabics, while most of Nunavut uses an updated system developed in the 1970s. Speakers of the Natsilingmiut dialect, who live near the last known whereabouts of the Franklin Expedition, employ four more characters used by nobody else.

“So, the syllabic writing system is all over the place,” said Eetoolook.



A sign written in various languages, clockwise from top left, English, Inuktitut (syllabic), French, and Inuktitut (Roman orthography), welcomes visitors to Iqaluit, Nunavut.

Inuit leaders have been discussing a unified script since the 1970. But as might be expected with an effort to revamp a written language across 160,000 kilometres of Arctic, the idea has been controversial.

At times, Inuit elders even saw the proposal as sacrilege. Since certain Inuit Bibles were originally penned in syllabics, translating them into Roman orthography was seen as disrupting the word of God.

Even now, “the move to completely switch over to Roman orthography was not taken lightly by Inuit in the eastern Arctic as they have a deep attachment to it,” said Eetoook.

“Many associate syllabics with their Inuit identity.”

But what's changed Inuit minds this time around is education. The wide variance of written Inuktitut — and the difficulty of learning syllabics — has resulted in young Inuit abandoning the tongue for English.

In 2009, linguist Aurélie Hot surveyed syllabic literacy across parts of Nunavut, and found only teachers and translators were using it daily.

“There seem to be a vicious circle that keeps the status of Inuktitut at the level of a symbolic language,” said Hot in a 2010 interview with the Iqaluit-based Nunatsiaq News.

For fear of offending any particular region or speaker, Inuit leaders are urging a very careful approach to designing the unified language. As Arreak-Kullualik said, it will be carefully designed not to disrupt regional pronunciations “it will be like saying ‘potato’ in one region and ‘po-tah-to’ in another.”

And even then, once the language is complete, the plan is only to place it into the school system.

The really tricky work — swapping out syllabics traffic signs and translating government documents into the new script — will have to wait until a future when the unified language generation has come of age.

“We could see, ten to fifteen years down the road, that it’s a possibility that syllabics will be phased out,” said Palluq-Cloutier.

The language might stay in the education system, she noted, but in history class.

Direct Link: <http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/with-nine-written-versions-and-two-alphabets-inuit-language-finally-getting-much-needed-makeover>

Aboriginal Jobs & Labour

Nunavik leaders: why aren’t more Inuit filling KRG jobs?

"They can do the job. Just train them"

SARAH ROGERS, September 21, 2015 - 11:55 am



The Kativik Regional Government's headquarters in Kuujjuaq. Today, Inuit make up 65 per cent of the organization's workforce, but it's elected members want to see more local hires. (FILE PHOTO)

KUUIJUAQ — Kativik Regional Government councillors say they want to see more Inuit employees filling jobs at Nunavik's main administrative body.

Councillors said at regional council meetings last week that they're concerned Inuit are applying for jobs within the regional government and not getting them.

"We always say that we want to see more Inuit," Kuujuaq councillor Jennifer Watkins told meetings Sept. 16.

"I know there were Inuit who applied [for positions] and were not hired."

The issue is a sticking point for many regional leaders who, despite the KRG's 65-per-cent Inuit workforce, say there are still too many positions filled by southern recruits.

But it's not just staff positions Nunavik councillors want to see filled by local people, but management positions at the regional government, 33 per cent of which are currently held by Inuit.

"We will always be here. We are Nunavimmiut," Watkins said. "For that reason, we should be in those positions. They can do the job. Just train them."

The KRG says it's trying.

In 2013, the KRG's human resources department [launched a succession management plan](#), to help prepare its Inuit employees to eventually move into senior positions.

The strategy targets veteran staffers who are willing and able to take part, mentored by current department heads.

KRG chair Maggie Emudluk pointed to four Inuit who have moved into leadership roles at the organization in the past year.

"We have to make sure [Inuit] can succeed in where they want to be," Emudluk said.

"It's hard as a leader, because you want to make sure as many Inuit as possible are staffed at our regional organizations."

As part of Parnasimautik consultations across the region, Nunavimmiut said they want to design and deliver their own programs and services.

"So let's keep trying," Emudluk said. "If we want to reach our goal, our future, we have to be part of it."

Emudluk said the organization is still looking for an Inuk candidate to move into the role of director general, currently held by Isabelle Parizeau.

Parizeau, who was an assistant director at KRG, has served as director since [Jobie Tukkiapik left that job in early 2012.](#)

“We have an excellent, mostly Inuit staff,” Parizeau told KRG meetings last week. “[Recruiting more Inuit staff] is a goal and we’re constantly working in that direction.” Isabelle Proulx, the head of human resources at the KRG, told councillors that all job openings are posted in each of the communities.

And the KRG’s selection committee, who advises the executive on new hires, always include Inuit members, she added.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674why_arent_more_inuit_filling_regional_government_jobs_nunavik_leaders/

Aboriginal Politics

Natan Obed elected president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami

'I'm really shocked and excited about this new opportunity,' Obed says

[CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 17, 2015 2:00 PM CT Last Updated: Sep 17, 2015 4:50 PM CT



Natan Obed was elected as Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami president today in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut. (Mitchel Wiles/CBC)

Natan Obed was elected as Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami president today in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut.

"I'm really shocked and excited about this new opportunity," Obed said today.

The national organization represents Inuit across Canada. Its board comprises representatives from four regional Inuit land claims and the president of Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada.

Obed says his first priority is to "take stock and to get re-acquainted with the organization." He says he also needs to wrap up his work at his current job at Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated.

Obed was the youngest of three candidates. Incumbent Terry Audla who served for one term from 2012 until now and Jerry Komaksiutiksak who works for the Mamisarvik Healing Centre in Ottawa also ran for the position.

Grilled for not speaking Inuktitut

After his speech this morning, Obed was grilled by board members about his inability to speak Inuktitut fluently. He responded that "language is not what makes me Inuit."

"This is a great day for those of us who still struggle with language," he told CBC. "Because it shows that as long as we have the vision and the passion for Inuit language and the willingness to learn, that we're not going to be penalized for not at this very second, this moment in time, not speaking Inuktitut."

Obed said he'll push forward language issues as president of ITK. He also plans to push for suicide prevention, education and a place within the federal government.

"Inuit have a constitutionally protected voice and we need to be participants in everything that affects Inuit at the federal level," he said.

ITK said in a news release that Obed has held senior roles within the Labrador Inuit Association, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. He has also served as the acting president of Nunavut's Embrace Life Council and has served as the chair of ITK's National Inuit Committee on Health and a member of the National Committee on Inuit Education.

Obed needed seven of 13 votes to receive a majority — he received seven.

He was sworn-in for his three-year term this afternoon.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/natan-obed-elected-president-of-inuit-tapiriit-kanatami-1.3232712>

Faced with federal budget cuts, national Inuit org brainstorms at AGM

"Forced to make some tough decisions about how we operate"

JANE GEORGE, September 17, 2015 - 9:00 am



Board members of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami stand in the atrium of the Kitikmeot Inuit Association building in Cambridge Bay Sept. 16 with Truth and Reconciliation Commissioner Marie Wilson (fourth from left, first row). (PHOTO BY JANE GEORGE)



Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami president Terry Audla, left, with Carol Jattan, ITK's finance director, speaks Sept. 16 at the organization's annual general meeting in Cambridge Bay about the 70 per cent cuts to ITK's core funding over the past two years. (PHOTO BY JANE GEORGE)

CAMBRIDGE BAY — When Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami convened its annual general meeting Sept. 16 in the western Nunavut town of Cambridge Bay, delegates, who include top elected officials from Inuit birthright organizations across Canada, learned more about the extent of ITK's reduced budget and its impact on operations.

Cuts in core funding imposed by the federal government mean the organization that serves Inuit now has 70 per cent less money to fund its core operations than it did two years ago.

Overall, Nellie Cournoyea, the president of the Inuvialuit Regional Corp. and ITK treasurer, reported this means ITK had a total budget — core funding plus program funding — of \$6.4 million in 2014 but only \$5.3 million in 2015.

Speaking Sept. 16, one day before he stood for re-election, incumbent president Terry Audla said that when he was elected as ITK president in 2012, he vowed to pursue new sources of funding to reduce ITK's reliance on the federal government.

As a result, he described year 2014-15 as "a year of measured and important change."

Since April 2015, ITK has raised \$1.3 million from non-governmental sources, Audla said. That's four times more than the amount raised in 2011.

"We were forced to make some tough decisions about how we operate. As a result, we had to let go a number of staff. And we renewed our focus on expanding our funding base beyond government services," Audla said.

The ITK administration, finance and communication departments, which rely solely on core funding and not money from specific project funding, have been "pinched," he said.

Meanwhile, ITK wants to promote many projects, such as the [Inuktitut language standardization drive](#) and [Inuit education efforts](#), just to mention two of the ITK's ongoing programs.

And ITK also wants to work on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's [94 "calls for action," released this past June](#), and the development of National Centre on Truth and Reconciliation.

At the AGM Sept. 16, TRC Commissioner Marie Wilson outlined what the commission wants to see in the future, including a national council on reconciliation.

Wilson urged ITK board members to include the TRC "calls for action" in their regional organization's priorities and to question federal candidates about their positions on the TRC.

The AGM passed a resolution asking, among other things, for a new framework to support "the ongoing reconciliation between Canada's Aboriginal people and the Crown."

They also called on all levels of government to implement the TRC's 94 calls to actions, along with Inuit involvement.

At the AGM, board members also delivered reports.

Rebecca Kudloo, the president of Pauktuutit Inuit women's association, said "funding has been a challenge, as it has been for many other Inuit organizations," such as the Inuit Circumpolar Council-Canada whose president Duane Smith [revealed Sept. 15 at its Cambridge Bay AGM](#) that Norway — not Canada — will help Canadian Inuit attend the United Nations climate change meeting in December.

But not every discussion revolved around money at the ITK AGM.

After hearing information in the reports, PJ Akeeagok, president of the Qikiqtani Inuit Association, suggested that ITK board members find a way to share best practices on how, for example, they can craft Inuit impact and benefit agreements.

“We’re all in our own silos,” Akeeagok said.

The next ITK AGM will take place in Nunavik, likely in Salluit, during the same week as the ICC-Canada annual meeting.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiagonline.ca/stories/article/65674faced_with_slashed_budget_national_inuit_org_brainstorms/

Yukon First Nations questions get answers from most federal candidates

Liberal, NDP and Green candidates responded, Conservative candidate did not

[CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 18, 2015 6:31 AM CT Last Updated: Sep 18, 2015 6:36 AM CT



Green Party's Frank De Jong, NDP's Melissa Atkinson and Liberal Party's Larry Bagnell responded to questions sent to them by the Council of Yukon First Nations. (submitted/CBC/CBC)

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations, Bill S-6, self-government, and missing and murdered indigenous women are key issues in the federal election for the Council of Yukon First Nations, and it sent questions to Yukon's candidates to find out where they stand on them.

"We take great interest in the federal election," the questionnaire states. "We believe it is of utmost importance that our Citizens have answers to questions that are relevant to us, as First Nations, to make an informed decision."

The questions were sent on Sept. 8, and candidates were asked to respond within a week. Nine days later, the NDP's Melissa Atkinson, Liberal Larry Bagnell and Green candidate Frank De Jong had submitted their answers, but Conservative candidate Ryan Leef had not.

NDP response

NDP candidate Melissa Atkinson says an NDP government would immediately repeal "undemocratic" Bill S-6, which she says "will bring further uncertainty and harm to Yukon's economy."

She also says her party will ensure reliable long-term funding for Yukon First Nations, and address violence against aboriginal women with expanded access to shelters and transition houses.

Atkinson also says she will prioritize implementing the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and her party will establish an inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women.

Liberal response

Liberal candidate Larry Bagnell says his party will also establish an inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women, and implement a Federal Reconciliation Framework in response to the TRC report. He also says the Liberals would repeal the "four offending amendments" to Bill S-6.

Bagnell also says a Liberal government would ensure the Kelowna Accord — an agreement reached between First Nations and Paul Martin's Liberal government, later abandoned by Stephen Harper's Conservative government — is embraced and implemented, to make up for "10 long, lost years."

Bagnell says his party would review any legislation "unilaterally imposed on Indigenous Peoples," and rescind any deemed unacceptable.

Green response

Frank De Jong of the Green Party also wants to repeal those "reprehensible parts of Bill S-6," and launch a national inquiry into murdered and missing aboriginal women. He says the Greens would support full implementation of all the recommendations of the TRC.

De Jong says Greens will work to settle land claims, and establish self-government agreements. His party would also invest in traditional language education, and remove the post-secondary funding cap for First Nations students.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/yukon-candidates-federal-election-first-nations-1.3233065>

Cuthand: Budget balanced at heavy cost to First Nations

By Doug Cuthand, The Starphoenix September 18, 2015



Doug Cuthand

The Conservatives are focusing on the fiscal bottom line and their achievement in creating a minor surplus in the 2014-15 federal budget. This ignores the deficits that have been created in other areas.

The government's posted surplus of \$1.9 billion came largely by way of spending cuts and lapsed funding. While it might make good superficial news during the political campaign, the Tory surplus came at a price.

New policies in the federal government reward senior bureaucrats for spending less and returning funds to the general treasury. The Indian agents at the colonial office have been especially eager to embrace this new method of operation.

For example, lapsed social services spending at Aboriginal Affairs over the past five years was more than \$1 billion. The Immigration department lapsed \$350 million over three years. Aboriginal organizations have also received cuts to their funding and threats of more. This way our politicians are muzzled and there is less outcry when services are cut back.

There was a total of \$8.7 billion left unspent in the federal budget and handed back to the general revenue fund. If one stands back and looks at the big picture, one sees that Canada has a twotrillion-dollar economy and a federal budget of about \$300 billion. So a \$1.9-billion surplus is less than one per cent of the total budget.

The National Post quoted former parliamentary budget officer Kevin Page saying he had no doubt the Conservative government ordered senior public servants to "put the brakes" on spending to ensure a surplus during the election campaign.

The government brags about its good fiscal stewardship, but the whole process was orchestrated. The budget that was presented to Parliament showed a small deficit that could easily be erased and presented as a surplus during the election. All the government had to do was to simply stop spending.

Tory times have been hard times for First Nations. In addition to a two-per-cent cap on funding increases, the government lapsed funds and cut back funding wherever possible.

Lapsing funds is different from cutbacks in that it's spending has been approved by Parliament in the budget but not spent. Cutbacks refer to funding that's cut and not placed in the budget - such as the cutbacks to aboriginal organizations.

When a First Nation's annual budget is determined, there is no room for input from the First Nation itself. Aboriginal Affairs simply presents its numbers on a "take it or leave it" basis. Even if the First Nation has increased population figures, needs capital for repairs or faces unavoidable cost increases, the government doesn't negotiate. It simply ignore the facts.

For example, my First Nation had a problem with the school's leaky roof and the council applied for funds to repair it. Even though not repairing the roof would result in serious water damage to the school, we were refused. The council had to come up with the funds from our meagre resources. Meanwhile, the department lapsed education capital funds.

Education and related capital costs are a treaty right, but this just doesn't seem to move the Conservative government. All year, First Nations leaders and supporters have been pointing out the serious gaps that exist between funding for First Nations and what's provided by the provinces for their programs. The Saskatchewan government provides education funding of about \$10,000 per student while Aboriginal Affairs provides about \$6,000. This amount varies across the country, but it amounts to a 35 per cent to 40 per cent shortfall nationally.

Cindy Blackstock, the executive director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society, has taken on an eight-year fight to the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal citing human rights violations in the funding shortfalls.

While Aboriginal Affairs practices parsimony against the First Nations, it racks up the highest legal bill of any federal department - often in excess of \$100 million a year as it fights legal challenges by First Nations.

The Conservatives are focusing on a razor thin surplus that magically appeared in the middle of the election campaign. The other side of the ledger is ignored.

Canada's First Nations have serious deficits in education, social services and infrastructure - deficits that go unreported but whose impact manifest themselves in the high dropout rate, overcrowded schools and homes, and poor health outcomes. Sadly, our people are leading the social indicators of poverty, addictions, incarceration and so on.

I submit that the deficit in the First Nations services and quality of life should have priority over the government's shallow attempts to balance the budget. We need a government that will show compassion and live up to the spirit and intent of the treaties that built this land.

Direct Link:

www.thestarphoenix.com/life/Cuthand+Budget+balanced+heavy+cost+First+Nations/11372992/story.html

Vaughn Palmer: No quick fix for gulf between province and First Nations

Both acknowledge lack of a ‘common understanding’ of their relationship

By Vaughn Palmer, Vancouver Sun columnist September 18, 2015



Premier Christy Clark addresses the gathering of First Nations leaders and B.C. cabinet ministers in Vancouver last week.

VICTORIA — As aboriginal leaders prepared for the recent all-chiefs meeting with Premier Christy Clark and her cabinet, they received a stiffly worded legal rebuff to the principles that they'd put forward for endorsement at last year's session.

The B.C. Liberals did not make the letter public when it was sent out in mid-July and this week they refused a request to release it now. But thanks to a copy obtained elsewhere, I can report that it documents a gulf between the province and the natives over how to proceed after the Supreme Court of Canada's landmark recognition of aboriginal title here in B.C.

First Nations want the government to recognize that aboriginal rights and title apply "throughout B.C.," and all that would entail in terms of indigenous self-government, joint management of lands and resources, and revenue sharing.

The three main organizations representing B.C. natives — the First Nations Summit, the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs and the B.C. Assembly of First Nations — set out their position in a four-item statement of principles at the all-chiefs gathering in September 2014, two months after the SCC judgment in the Tsilhqot'in case.

The principles declared in part: “We acknowledge that all our relationships are based on recognition and implementation of the existence of indigenous peoples’ inherent title and rights ... throughout B.C.”

But when provincial officials expressed reservations about endorsing the principles in face-to-face meetings in advance of this year’s gathering, First Nations leaders asked for the province to put its perspective in writing.

Hence the five-page letter that went out over the signature of deputy attorney general Richard Fyfe, which pretty much rejected all four principles.

“The overarching problem,” explained Fyfe, “is that the statements are founded on the assumption that there is Aboriginal title throughout B.C. — a term that may be interchangeable with ‘everywhere.’”

“That interpretation is not consistent with existing legal authority or the available ethnographic and historical record,” he continued. “It would be inappropriate in our view for the province from a legal perspective to proceed with negotiation of agreements based on those concepts.”

Granted, the high court recognized aboriginal title for the Tsilhqot'in. But the award covered less than half of the original claim and a still smaller fraction of the band’s traditional territory. Plus the court laid down tough provisions for establishing title, obliging claimants to prove continuous and exclusive occupation, pre-dating Crown sovereignty.

Far from requiring the “implementation” of rights and title throughout B.C., “the decision does not require recognition of Aboriginal title, consent-based decision making or title-based fiscal relations” outside Tsilhqot'in territory, in the provincial government reading of it.

The letter further disputed that there was any court-dictated obligation to recognize “indigenous systems of governance and laws throughout B.C.,” which was another item on the statement of principles.

“We are unaware of anything in Canadian law that gives effect to indigenous governance authority either over aboriginal title lands or beyond those lands,” wrote Fyfe. “The courts have yet to recognize aboriginal rights of self-government of the kind that are alluded to in this statement. When a court is called upon to do so, it will have to consider an appropriate balancing of such laws within a constitutional democracy.”

He also quibbled with the references to “indigenous peoples” in the statement of principles, saying it was “terminology used in the international context” but “it has not, to my knowledge, yet been defined for use in a Canadian context.”

The letter closed by suggesting some statements of principle that the province would accept. “The regulation of lands and resources in B.C. can be enhanced if informed by First Nations uses of and relationships with the lands and resources in their claimed traditional territories,” for instance, and also that “we jointly acknowledge that there are many reasons to work toward negotiated outcomes, rather than seeking recourse to the courts.”

Putting the bluntness of his message into perspective, Fyfe asked natives to recognize that the contents were crafted through “a legal lens,” which was “only one of a number of lenses that are needed as we work through these matters.”

The Liberals would appear to have taken refuge in the “legal lens” line of defence in responding to First Nation complaints about not-in-the-least accommodating tone and content of the letter.

For when Grand Chief Ed John of the First Nations Summit mentioned the letter in passing in a speech to the all-chiefs gathering last week, he did so only to thank the premier for saying that Fyfe’s views constituted legal advice, not government policy.

Still when the province and First Nations this week released a plan for working together in the year ahead, the 13-page text included an unmistakable echo of the differences set out in the Fyfe letter:

“We have yet to come to a common understanding of what it means to engage in a government-to-government relationship based on recognition of aboriginal title and rights, as evidenced by our different perspectives on the four principles which were presented by chiefs to the province for endorsement” as last year’s session.

“This is not intended to be a long, drawn-out process,” they further maintained. But given the gap between them, I don’t see how it could unfold any other way.

Direct Link:

<http://www.vancouversun.com/life/vaughn+palmer+quick+gulf+between+province+first+nations/11372223/story.html>

Mi’kmaw professor calling on Indigenous leaders to push Canada to accept more Syrian refugees

[National News](#) | September 17, 2015 by [Trina Roache](#)



(Dean of Unama'ki College, Stephen Augustine would like Canada to accept more Syrian refugees)

Trina Roache

APTN National News

HALIFAX — Like the rest of the world, Stephen Augustine was struck by the image of three-year-old Alan Kurdi's body washed up on a Turkish beach, drowned, along with his mother and brother after their attempt to flee war-torn Syria.

"The Mi'kmaw culture, the Mi'kmaw people pride themselves on family," said Augustine, Dean of the Unama'ki College at Cape Breton University. "When I saw the front page image of a dead child on a beach, this really hit me."

Last week, Augustine spoke out at a public meeting in Sydney, Cape Breton where about 200 people came to talk about how to help bring Syrian refugees to Canada.

"My voice broke when I was speaking, I was so emotional, but this really speaks to the Mi'kmaw principles and family values," said Augustine. "I challenge the Mi'kmaw leadership, and aboriginal leadership in Canada, to pressure the Harper government to increase the quotas for refugees coming to Canada."

Since 2014, Canada has accepted 2,406 refugees from Syria.

Under pressure from opposition parties, Harper has now made a commitment to bring 11,300 refugees from Syria by 2017, announced the Syria Emergency Relief Fund and will match donations up to \$100 million until the end of 2015.



The photo that went around the world. The body of Alan Kurdi on a Turkish beach. Photo: Nilüfer Demir/Doğan News Agency

But those numbers pale in comparison to the Syrian population displaced by the humanitarian crisis. In a report released earlier this month, the United Nations's Commission of Inquiry on Syria cited 7.6 million people are displaced within Syria and over four million refugees flowing over the border into neighboring countries.

Chair of the Commission, Mr. Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, said there's no end to this crisis in sight.

"Civilians are suffering the unimaginable, as the world stands witness," said Pinheiro. "Without stronger efforts to bring parties to the peace table, ready to compromise, current trends suggest that the Syrian conflict – and the killing and destruction it wreaks – will carry on for the foreseeable future."

Critics have argued the Harper government isn't doing enough and the plight of Syria has become a federal election topic on campaign trail.

Green's Party leader Elizabeth May said in a release, "I expect Canada to take on its share of the responsibility in the Syrian refugee crisis, so we never see these types of images again. Stephen Harper has no credibility whatsoever on this issue, having failed to honour previous announcements. We should ramp up the number of refugees welcomed to Canada to 25,000 and we must do more to end the conflict, including living up to our commitments to the UN High Commission for Refugees."

Liberal leader Justin Trudeau has promised to raise the number of refugees from Syria to 25 thousand, while the NDP put the number at 10,000 for the first year with a promise of 9,000 a year for the next four years.



Augustine calls Prime Minister Harper's focus on ISIS and security concerns a case of fear-mongering. He sees an influx of refugees as a bonus to Cape Breton's fragile economy.

"Local refugees have contributed to the economy," said Augustine. "In Sydney, it would increase the number of students in local schools, get more students in university, and have people developing businesses from a different cultural perspective."

And from the traditional Mi'kmaw and Wolastoq, or Maliseet, cultural perspective, refugees are welcome.

Wolastoq Grand Council member Ron Tremblay spoke at a recent rally for the Syrian Refugees in Fredericton.

"The Wolastoqeyiyik signed Peace and Friendship Treaties in the 18th Century with the first Refugees who sailed from France," said Tremblay. "They were searching for a better place live and escape the uneasiness that was evolving in their country."

He said the spirit and intent of the early treaties the Mi'kmaq and Maliseet signed in the 1700s is still living today.

"These people are not migrants they are refugees fleeing from their home and villages beings bombed and destroyed by US and Canadian forces," said Tremblay. "Our Wolastoqeyiyik were and still are about Peace and Friendship."

Augustine agrees.

Aside from his day job as a professor, he's an elder and Hereditary Chief of the Sigenigtog District Mi'kmawey Mawiomi, and Keptin on the Mi'kmaq Grand Council.

"We didn't have an immigration policy," said Augustine, referring to the arrival of Europeans to Mi'ma'ki. "So we allowed you guys to come in and we supported you and looked after you until you could do it yourself, otherwise we could have wiped you all out."

Augustine wants action.

In Cape Breton, a steering committee has been set up to help facilitate private sponsorship for refugees. And a rally is planned for this weekend at Cape Breton University.

But so far, indigenous leaders are silent on the issue.

Mi'kmaq chiefs have no comment on the Syrian refugee crisis.

And APTN received no response from the Assembly of First Nations.

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/09/17/mikmaw-professor-calling-on-indigenous-leaders-to-push-canada-to-accept-more-syrian-refugees/>

National Inuit org interrogates the federal political parties

ITK poses eight election-related questions

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, September 18, 2015 - 1:30 pm



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INUIT TAPIRIIT KANATAMI

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami has sent a questionnaire to federal parties to ask their positions on Inuit-specific issues.

As in past years, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami has sent a questionnaire to federal political parties that seeks their view on issues pertaining to Inuit.

“They have been circulated to the federal parties and we will post each party’s complete response to the questionnaire in the order that they are received,” ITK said in a media release, issued just before the organization’s general meeting in Cambridge Bay.

This year, ITK asks eight questions:

1. In the opinion of your Party, what is the most important current issue and/or opportunity for Canadian Inuit and what would your Party do on this file in the next 5 years?
2. How does your Party view the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and what, if anything, would your government do about implementing the recommendations made in the TRC report?
3. How would your government acknowledge and incorporate Inuit Nunangat, the Inuit homeland, in federal policy to ensure that all Inuit regions (whether North or South of 60)

are included in programs designed for the North, recognizing that Inuit are a distinct people with unique legal, historic, social, cultural and linguistic considerations?

4. What policies would your government put in place to ensure the timely and effective implementation of Inuit land claims agreements?

5. How would your government work with Inuit to support the creation of a sustainable housing supply in Inuit communities?

6. What measures would your government put in place to address the cost of living in Inuit communities?

7. What approach would your government take toward working with the Inuit of Canada, especially in regard to ensuring the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent?

8. What is your Party's position on the importance of collecting and analysing Inuit-specific data to guide policy and decision making? What, if any, measures would your government put in place to strengthen Canada's ability to collect and analyse Inuit-specific data?

ITK says any answers to these questions will be distributed on social media and posted on their website: <http://www.itk.ca>.

[Bob McLeod, the premier of the Northwest Territories](#), sent a letter to four federal party leaders this past Aug. 18 that contains seven questions on northern issues.

However, neither the Nunavut government nor the Nunavut premier have sent an election questionnaire to political parties or candidates.

Editor's note: We have reproduced the list of questions as they were received from ITK and have not changed non-standard punctuation and mechanics.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674national_inuit_org_interrogates_the_federal_political_parties/

First Nations economic crisis ignored: AFN National Chief says following leaders debate

[National News](#) | September 18, 2015 by [APTN National News](#)



APTN National News

OTTAWA — The National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations said federal leaders ignored a perfect opportunity to explain their vision and plans for including First Nations in the economy Thursday night in Calgary.

Instead, Perry Bellegarde said Liberal leader Pierre Trudeau, NDP leader Thomas Mulcair and Prime Minister Stephen Harper largely “ignored” issues crucial to First Nation peoples and Canadians.

“Canada’s economic future demands that we work on First Nations land issues, resource issues, Treaties, First Nations rights and strong First Nations peoples and communities,” said Bellegarde in a statement released after the debate. “First Nations communities were ignored apart from Mr. Trudeau’s effort to raise First Nations economic issues.”

Sharp-elbowed exchanges and three leaders talking over one another marked the early going in a crucial election debate on the economy.

Stephen Harper, looking to extend his Conservative government rule into a second decade, maintained that a stay-the-course, tax-cutting agenda is the road to prosperity.

“I’ve never said things were great” in the Canadian economy,“ Harper allowed.

“I’ve said we’re living in a very challenging environment,” the three-term prime minister said before asking viewers directly, “where would you rather live?”

NDP Leader Tom Mulcair and Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau took turns jumping on Harper’s responses, and frequently each other’s, as the second of five leaders’ debates before the Oct. 19 vote took on a more combative tone.

“Mr. Harper sees the environment and the economy as polar opposites,” said Mulcair, standing in the middle between Harper to his left and Trudeau to his right.

“Everybody in Canada knows you have to work on both at the same time.”

“Which is why we’ve done both,” snapped Harper.

“Mr. Mulcair, you actually are the only leader in Canadian history to have gone to another country, you and your colleagues, to the United States to argue against Canadian jobs and against Canadian development projects.”

Trudeau, the lone leader in the debate who is proposing to run deficits over the next three years, challenged Harper by likening Canadians to homeowners taking on a home mortgage or a home renovation loan.

With rock-bottom interest rates and slack in the economy, “If this isn’t the time to invest, what would be?” asked Trudeau.

“This is the time to invest in the future of our country. Canadians know this. The only two people who don’t know this are the two gentlemen on this stage.”

Harper responded that the Conservatives are doing exactly that, without raising taxes and while balancing the books.

A couple of hundred chanting supporters penned outside the BMO Centre in Stampede Park bellowed their support and derision as the leaders arrived for the second of five scheduled debates before the Oct. 19 vote.

Chants of “four more years” competed with “Harper’s gotta go” and “just not ready” and “Trudeau! Trudeau!” from the crowd framed by a kaleidoscope of blue, red and orange signs that lined a fence separating partisans from arriving leaders.

It wasn’t the windiest part of the pre-debate show.

Both the Conservatives and New Democrats launched pre-emptive strikes against the Liberals in the hours before the leaders faced off over economic issues, considered the crucial, vote-moving issue of the election.

Their target, Trudeau, attempted to send his own message, staging a solo, sunrise canoe ride in Calgary, evoking memories of his father, Pierre, that Liberals quickly turned into a saccharine online ad.

The relentless air wars over more than six weeks of campaigning have left the three major parties in a statistical dead heat in the aggregate of public opinion surveys, dramatically upping the ante on each face-to-face debate among the leaders.

Trudeau has said he would run deficits until 2019 to pay for an ambitious infrastructure program to stimulate growth, while Harper and Mulcair are promising to balance the country’s books immediately.

Green Party Leader Elizabeth May was not invited to take part in the debate sponsored by the Globe and Mail. Rather, May took part in Victoria, B.C. participated by taking to Twitter and tweeting out responses to the party leaders and questions.

The Assembly of First Nations, perhaps more involved in this election than in past campaigns, released document Sept. 2, titled Closing the Gap: 2015 Federal Election Priorities for First Nations and Canada.

It outlines the AFN's five top challenges to the federal leaders including, strengthening First Nations, families and communities, sharing and equitable funding, upholding rights, respecting the environment, revitalization Indigenous languages and truth and reconciliation. None of these issues were addressed Thursday night by the leaders.

Bellegarde also released a document at the beginning of the election outlining 51 ridings in Canada where First Nation votes could have an impact.

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/09/18/first-nations-economic-crisis-ignored-afn-national-chief-says-following-leaders-debate/>

Another no-show for Skinner, this time at candidates debate on First Nations issues

By [Kennedy Gordon](#), Peterborough Examiner

Friday, September 18, 2015 11:23:58 EDT PM



Liberal candidate Maryam Monsef, the Greens' Doug Mason and NDP candidate Dave Nickle listen to a question during an all-candidates meeting at the Lions Centre on Burnham St. Friday September 18, 2015 in Peterborough, Ont. Conservative candidate Mike Skinner did not attend the event, which focused on issues affecting First Nations. Kennedy Gordon/Peterborough Examiner/Postmedia Network

With the candidate for the governing Conservative party a no-show, the three other panelists taking part in Friday night's First Nations-related debate found themselves in agreement about indigenous concerns for much of the event.

The Green party's Doug Mason, Liberal Maryam Monsef and the NDP's Dave Nickle took a series of questions during the three-hour all-candidates meeting for Peterborough-Kawartha riding candidates at the Lions Community Centre. Hosted by the Nijkiwendidaa Anishnaabekwewag Services Circle, the event was moderated by Trent Prof. David Newhouse and opened with a traditional prayer, a musical performance and a brief overview of voting in Canada.

Conservative candidate Mike Skinner wasn't there. Toban Leckie, from the new Strength in Democracy party, was in attendance but did not take part in the debate.

Candidates answered seven prepared questions, with prepared answers, before the floor opened up to questions from the 100-member audience. Most questions focused on issues facing First Peoples in Canada today: The Truth and Reconciliation Report, clean water, urban aboriginal services and the environment.

On many issues, the three candidates were more or less in synch, calling for more action to help First Peoples, more consultation and a "nation to nation" or "government to government" approach to working with indigenous communities.

The lead question concerned missing and murdered aboriginal women in Canada - a number close to 2,000, and an issue that, so far, has not garnered much attention from Ottawa.

Monsef said a Liberal government would launch an inquiry "in the first 100 days" into the case, while Nickle said he found it "shameful" that more hasn't already been done, saying an inquiry is a priority for an NDP government.

"It's unacceptable that we're needing to have this debate in Canada in the first place," Monsef said.

Nickle said someone recently pointed out to him that the immense effort made when a little girl went missing and was killed out west earlier this week isn't made when indigenous girls and women vanish.

"It brought incredible shame to me about my country," he said, "and I don't want to be ashamed of my country."

Mason said the same - it shouldn't be happening, and a Green government would not only call an inquiry, but would work to solve the underlying problems that led the crisis to happen.

Both Monsef and Nickle pointed out that Skinner should have been present to answer that question, with Nickle saying twice that Prime Minister Stephen Harper has said the issue isn't on the government's radar.

"I think it's reprehensible that the candidate for the Conservative government thinks that (this issue) is not worthy of his attention," Nickle said.

The candidates all condemned the Conservative government's changes to environmental assessment laws and the Navigable Waters Act, which Nickle said gives companies the right to override First Nations' concerns about the impact of resource development.

And all three said the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission must be acted upon, not, as Nickle said, "put on a shelf to gather dust like other Royal Commissions."

Another question dealt with treaty rights vs. landowner rights, with the recent controversy over the rice beds on Pigeon Lake as an example.

Nickle and Mason said better consultation was needed, with Monsef agreeing, pointing out that Parks Canada "made an error" in allowing landowners to clear out First Nations rice beds this summer, and improved communications would have solved that.

Clean water was discussed. Nickle said it's wrong that communities like Curve Lake, so close to Peterborough, deal with ongoing boil-water advisories when the same problem would be handled quickly in other communities.

Monsef also promised to work hard to bring clean water to Curve Lake, saying the planning of a water treatment plant would be left to the community, while she would advocate for funding in Ottawa.

Some questions from the audience focused on more general issues, including the controversial Bill C-51, which includes security measures that have raised privacy concerns. Monsef was asked why the Liberals voted for the bill - she said the party had concerns and those concerns are still there, but the bill was still necessary. Changes would be made under a Justin Trudeau government, she added before pointing out that with the resignation of former MP Dean Del Mastro last year, "while that debate was going on in Parliament, there was no one speaking for this riding."

While Leckie wasn't part of the debate, he was given the opportunity to read a prepared statement at the beginning of the evening. Partway into the emotional speech about murdered and missing women and the lack of action from the Conservative government - and after a microphone malfunction - Leckie briefly lost his composure. Curve Lake Chief Phyllis Williams stepped in to help before he came back, fired up and greeted by applause, to talk briefly about his work in the far north as a guide and the impact he's seen of the government's disregard for indigenous peoples.

At the start of the meeting, Williams urged indigenous people, whether they live on a reserve or in an urban area, to vote, noting that changes to the Elections Act - which include the requirement for a piece of ID other than a Status Card to vote - may make it difficult, but they should make the effort.

Direct Link: <http://www.thepeterboroughexaminer.com/2015/09/18/another-no-show-for-skinner-this-time-at-candidates-debate-on-first-nations-issues>

Spurred by anger, Aboriginals may cast decisive vote in Canada election

WINNIPEG | By Rod Nickel, Fri Sep 18, 2015 9:16pm BST

Canada's Aboriginal people, less than half of whom usually vote because many do not recognise the government's sovereignty, could help decide the outcome of an unusually tight three-way federal election race in October.

Spurred by anger over disproportionately high rates of violence against indigenous women and poor living standards as well as resource development and environmental issues, Aboriginal voters are being urged by their national chief to vote.

Known as First Nations, indigenous Canadians want an inquiry into the cases of missing and murdered women. The ruling Conservative government has declined a national inquiry while the centre-left Liberals and New Democrats support the idea.

"Clearly, there is an awakening happening," pollster Bruce Cameron said. "If either the Liberals or (New Democrats) can tap into that, that will be a really interesting factor in this election."

Grassroots efforts to draw attention to issues and heavy social media interest point to potentially higher participation.

Assembly of First Nations, the main Aboriginal political group, has identified 51, or 15 percent, of Canada's 338 electoral districts as including enough Aboriginal voters to swing results.

A study by poll tracker ThreeHundredEight.com said that, based on 2011 results, the New Democrats stand to gain the most if Aboriginals vote in heavy numbers.

The New Democrats are running 23 Aboriginal candidates, 10 more than in 2011. Liberals have 17 Aboriginal candidates while the Conservatives have four, including a current cabinet minister.

Low Aboriginal voter turnout has cultural roots, as some identify more with their First Nation communities than Canada.

"I think that's your politics and I don't involve myself in your politics. We have our own politics and law," said Qeqmetgwe, an Aboriginal woman who was protesting outside a Conservative rally in British Columbia, urging people to vote against the prime minister.

New voter identification requirements may make it harder for Aboriginals to vote - addresses are now required but the main ID card for most indigenous people does not include that and many reserves do not have street addresses.

Last month, activist group Winnipeg Indigenous Rock the Vote spent hours helping people register for voting.

"No government is doing the work that needs to be done on missing and murdered indigenous women," said Lisa Forbes, an Aboriginal woman who is part of Rock the Vote. "So making it an issue is very important."

Police said last year 1,017 Aboriginal women had been murdered between 1980 and 2012, while another 108 are missing.

(Additional reporting by [Andrea Hopkins](#) in Toronto and [Julie Gordon](#) in Vancouver; Editing by [Tom Brown](#))

Direct Link: <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/09/18/uk-canada-election-aboriginal-idUKKCN0RI2AS20150918>

Sheehan discusses senior, aboriginal issues

By [Elaine Della-Mattia](#), Sault Star

Friday, September 18, 2015 4:12:42 EDT PM



Federal Liberal candidate Terry Sheehan has a partner to stump with Friday.

He was joined by Toronto-St. Paul's Liberal MP Carolyn Bennett on the campaign trail with visits to the Senior's Drop In Centre and Sault College.

Sheehan's message was that a Liberal government will provide real change for Canadian seniors.

Bennett, who serves as the Liberal critic for Aboriginal Affairs was also scheduled to speak at the First Nations Woman Conference Saturday.

"Every day I speak with people at the doors who tell me that they are struggling," Sheehan told a group of supporters at his campaign office. "It's not fair."

Sheehan said the Liberal's plan for seniors include restoring the eligibility age for Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement to 65, using infrastructure money to create affordable houses and invest in seniors centre.

In addition, pension income splitting for seniors will continue and a new seniors price index will be introduced.

Bennett said she's also inspired by the Rally the First Nation Vote movement.

The grassroots organization wants to organize eligible aboriginal voters and ensure they get to the polls to cast a ballot and ensure their issues are better represented on Parliament Hill.

Bennett said the root problem is cynicism that was created by government in the first place.

"The Liberal government hasn't always been perfect either. We've made some terrible mistakes and we've admitted that," she said.

That's why the Liberal's vow to accept and implement all 94 Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations, she said.

"The over reaching goal is to change the voice and get into a respectful relationship. Government to government relationships are important," she said.

Bennett said that if the relationship problems are smoothed out, the economic opportunities will also grow through partnerships.

She said the Liberal's plan includes earmarking billions of dollars toward First Nation education to ensure that they receive the same educational opportunities as other Canadians.

The federal election is Oct. 19.

Direct Link: <http://www.saultstar.com/2015/09/18/sheehan-discusses-senior-aboriginal-issues>

Bernard Valcourt's local First Nations connection belies his national image

Federal aboriginal affairs minister is vying for re-election in the northwestern Madawaska-Restigouche riding

By Jacques Poitras, [CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 21, 2015 6:20 AM AT Last Updated: Sep 21, 2015 10:06 AM AT



For many First Nations activists and organizations, Bernard Valcourt has become the bête noire of Stephen Harper's Conservative government.

As minister of aboriginal affairs and northern development, the veteran Conservative politician has been the face of Ottawa's approach to aboriginal issues.

He took over the department in the midst of the wave of Idle No More protests. He was on the job when a sweeping education plan negotiated with First Nations fell apart.

"There is politics at all levels: community, provincial, federal and it's no different within the First Nations."

- *Bernard Valcourt, Conservative candidate*

And in June, he was the focus of an indelible image: while others around him leapt to their feet to applaud a call for a national inquiry into murdered and missing aboriginal women, Valcourt stayed in his seat.

But in Valcourt's own backyard, where he is running again as the Conservative candidate in Madawaska-Restigouche in the Oct. 19 election, a different picture emerges — one that highlights the minister's own philosophy.

"I hear, of course, what the advocacy groups, the representative organizations, are saying and doing, but when you go meet the chiefs and councils on the ground, you hear a completely different story," Valcourt told CBC News.

"Some play political games, but most, the vast, vast majority, of the chiefs and councils that I've met with, we've made progress."



Conservative Bernard Valcourt is running for re-election in the northwestern riding of Madawaska-Restigouche. (Jacques Poitras/CBC)

Exhibit one in Valcourt's case is his own relationship with the Madawaska Maliseet First Nation, a small First Nations band, whose reserve sits within the city limits of Edmundston, where Valcourt lives.

As minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency until early 2013, and then as minister of aboriginal affairs, Valcourt has gone to bat for the Grey Rock Power Centre, a major retail and service development perched on a hill overlooking Edmundston.

The site, on the Trans-Canada Highway, includes a gas station, convenience store, Tim Horton's, and casino. A local car dealership is moving there and a new strip mall has just signed its first tenant.

In 2012, Valcourt secured \$3.5 million from ACOA for road and sewer work, and more recently got another \$1 million from his current department to help build the strip mall.

"He was quite helpful in pushing for the community to receive this economic development fund," says Chief Patricia Bernard.



Joanna Bernard is the former chief and now chief executive officer of the Madawaska Maliseet Economic Development Corp. (Jacques Poitras/CBC)

Joanna Bernard, a former chief who's now the chief executive officer of the band's economic development corporation, says the development is vital for the community.

"It's put us in a position where we can do quite a bit of other things and subsidize other programs that are underfunded through the federal government," she says.

Joanna Bernard says the leases at the site now provide the band more revenue than what it gets from Ottawa.

That's just one example of Valcourt helping the band.

He also supported it becoming the first in Canada to opt into new legislation governing First Nations elections, helping it meet a tight deadline. The band held its election Aug. 27.

The biggest change under the new rules is that the chief and council will now serve four-year terms, instead of a two-year mandate, under the Indian Act.

Chief Bernard says that's vital to the band government's goal to attract investment.

"What businesspeople tend to look for is the stability of the government. We can also do long-term planning and that's something that's important for any economic development," she says.

A reputation for delivering

Valcourt first started working with the band when he was a federal Progressive Conservative MP from 1984 to 1993. He was defeated that year and made a comeback in 2011.

He has a reputation as a politician who delivers for his riding, and that extends to the First Nation.

"It means that when they have specific challenges that confront them, they have a member of Parliament who can work with them to address those," he says.

He also points out that the chief and council have met the deadlines of the Harper government's First Nations Financial Transparency Act, which requires them to disclose their salaries and other spending information.

While some chiefs have criticized the law, Valcourt says it gives band members "the same degree of transparency and openness that all other governments [provide] in the country" and warns them that a Liberal or NDP government would undo that.



Valcourt sits as NDP Leader Tom Mulcair applauds when Justice Murray Sinclair said there should be an inquiry into missing and murdered women at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Ottawa in June. (Adrian Wyld/The Canadian Press)

Both Patricia and Joanna Bernard say they're not endorsing Valcourt or any other candidate in the election, and they say his good working relationship doesn't mean they agree with the Harper government's policies.

Even so, Patricia Bernard says she was sympathetic when Valcourt was criticized for remaining in his seat when everyone around him applauded the call for an inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women.

"It would have been nice if he could have, but I understand that he couldn't. If his boss says, 'Don't.' You don't, you know?"

Valcourt himself is unapologetic.

"I say what I mean, and I mean what I say, and I do what I say I'm going to do," he says, pointing out the government had already rejected calls for an inquiry before that moment in June.

There have been plenty of studies, so a new inquiry would cost tens of millions of dollars "to tell us what we already know," he says.

"So when Justice [Murray] Sinclair recommended — because the crowd, you know, wants this — a national inquiry, I was not going to stand up and applaud a recommendation for something we had already said we will not do.

"And I just stood my ground, as a responsible, honest politician should do, and as a responsible minister of cabinet."

'A friend, but ...'

Valcourt's NDP opponent in Madawaska-Restigouche acknowledges the minister himself is well-regarded in the constituency, including with members of the Madawaska First Nation.



NDP candidate Rosaire L'Italien points to the Madawaska First Nation land on the riding map in his campaign headquarters. (Jacques Poitras/CBC)

Still, Rosaire L'Italien says many First Nations voters plan to cast ballots for the NDP.

"A lot of them say Bernard is a friend, but a lot of them don't agree with the politics of his government, the Harper government," he says.

Valcourt also makes a distinction between national and local — but from a different perspective.

"There is politics at all levels: community, provincial, federal and it's no different within the First Nations," he says.

"But what I have learned and experienced [as minister] is you can work well and accomplish a lot with these individual First Nations."

The philosophy is typical of the Harper government: bypass official gatekeepers — so-called "special interest" groups such as national native groups — to deal more directly with Canadians.

Harper himself sounded a similar note in an interview with CBC's [*The House*](#) last week.

The Conservative leader said he wasn't sure if the Assembly of First Nations wanted to work with him to revive his aboriginal education plan, but "there are many communities and groups of communities in this country who want to move forward with that reform."

It's not unlike how the Conservatives sometimes use social media to bypass traditional news organizations, or have opted against funding daycare programs in favour of sending money directly to parents.

While national aboriginal organizations and activists may protest loudly, Valcourt says, "at the local level [chiefs and councils] are really preoccupied with the challenges their members are facing, and we have good working relationships. ... Progress is being made."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/bernard-valcourt-canada-election-2015-1.3234062>

Ryan Leef says he'll answer Yukon First Nations' election questions

Conservative candidate says he needed to confirm questionnaire was legitimate

[CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 21, 2015 12:57 PM CT Last Updated: Sep 21, 2015 4:25 PM CT



Yukon Conservative candidate Ryan Leef speaks with a member of the public at the Bill S-6 standing committee hearing in Whitehorse in March, 2015. (Mike Rudyk/CBC)

Ryan Leef says he has every intention of responding to a list of questions submitted by the Council of Yukon First Nations "as fast as possible" but that he first wanted to confirm the letter was legitimate.

The Yukon Conservative candidate was the only local contender not to respond to the Council of Yukon First Nations by its requested deadline last week. CYFN's questionnaire included four questions designed to gauge election candidates' positions on several issues.

Leef says "due diligence" has kept him from responding yet. He wanted to confirm the letter was legitimate as the document was "absolutely void of any First Nation leadership signature," he says.

"It was void of the Grand Chief's signature. It was void of any signature from any chief across the Yukon."

Line Gagnon of Calypso Communications, a company contracted by CYFN to develop and distribute the questionnaire, says CYFN emailed the questions to candidates on Sep. 8. She says a CYFN director then met with Leef's campaign director early last week to confirm that he received the document.

Leef says he contacted CYFN Grand Chief Ruth Massie directly, and now intends to respond to the questionnaire.

The four questions focus on issues deemed important to First Nations voters in Yukon, such as self-government, Bill S-6, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report, and missing and murdered indigenous women.

NDP candidate Melissa Atkinson, Liberal Larry Bagnell and Green candidate Frank De Jong have already replied.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/ryan-leef-says-he-ll-answer-yukon-first-nations-election-questions-1.3237242>

Cree Bradford Dean running in a Quebec Liberal stronghold for the Greens

[Investigates](#) | September 22, 2015 by [APTN Investigates](#)



Bradford Dean (right) dares to wear a Jets jersey at a Canadiens home game

Bradford Dean is running in the Montreal riding of [Lac-Saint-Louis](#) where the Green Party regularly gets more votes than the Bloc Quebecois. But like all Green candidates, with the exception of leader Elizabeth May, it will be a near impossible road to victory. He is up against the long-time Liberal incumbent [Francis Scarpaleggia](#), [Gabriel Bernier](#) for the Bloc Quebecois, [Ryan Young](#) for the NDP, and [Éric Girard](#) for the Conservative Party.

Dean is Cree originally from Manitoba. Biographical details [on the Green Party's website](#) are a little bit thin. His family is from The Pas, MB, which is across the Saskatchewan River from the Opaskwayak Cree Nation. But it's not clear on whether or not he is a member of that First Nation. Dean did attend junior high school in Winnipeg and went to the University of Winnipeg in 2006-2007. But due to his age, about 50, Dean would have been returning to school after some time away. His [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) profiles don't indicate what he did before pursuing post-secondary studies.



Since the mid-oughts, however, Bradford Dean has concentrated his studies and professional time largely to environmental issues. He is attending Concordia University in Montreal, studying for a Master of Environment degree. He currently volunteers at [Concordia Sustainability](#) “which teaches and demonstrates sustainability principles of

ecological health, social justice, and economic equality.” The posts he shares on his Facebook timeline reflect his passion for the environment.

He has also posted articles on Aboriginal issues, such as Manitoba MP Niki Ashton bringing the issue of missing and murdered women to the floor of the House of Commons. “Finally, someone talking for aboriginals in the house of commons. I have not heard anything like (sic) this in my lifetime. Someone who will unafraidly (sic) speak the truth.” And he offered his support for the Tsilhqot’in land decision. “This ruling sets a precedent for future claims of aboriginal title ... i.e. in Quebec where land cession treaties don’t exist,” he wrote.

As well, Dean [wrote a paper](#) last year for one of his graduate courses looking at the question of how sustainable would be the use of airships to service remote First Nations communities in the far north. He concluded that it was a topic that “deserves to be explored to its full potential.”

A riding profile [by Global News](#) stated that Lac-Saint-Louis has the most Anglophones in all of Quebec and the second highest median income in the province. That has meant the Bloc Quebecois candidate has finished behind the Green Party in the last two elections. But still well behind the Liberals, where one of their members has been elected in every election since the riding was created in 1997. Dean is also entering the race late, a replacement for Rohan Crichton, who was the original Green Party candidate. But how can you not like a guy who has the guts to wear a Winnipeg Jets jersey to a Montreal Canadiens home game.

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/09/22/cree-bradford-dean-running-in-a-quebec-liberal-stronghold-for-the-greens/>

Aboriginal issues a focus of debate

Communist candidate Dineen wins praise and all agree a new beginning must occur with First Nations



Five federal candidates took part in election forum Tuesday night at the Italian Canadian Club. The hall was packed for, for left, Marijuana party's Kornelis Klevering, Green

party's Gord Miller, Tristan Dineen of the Communist party, Lloyd Longfield of the Liberals, and Andrew Seagram of the NDP.

Guelph Mercury

By [Rob O'Flanagan](#), Sep 23, 2015

GUELPH — There was a bum in nearly every seat, and a stack of election issues were layered one atop another, as Guelph federal election candidates drew a crowd of about 250 to the Italian Canadian Club Tuesday night.

Questioners queued up eight-thick behind two microphones, eager to hear five perspectives on issues ranging from Aboriginal rights and equality, to the spectre of climate change and the state of unionism in the country.

An announcement by political scientist/moderator Tim Mau that Conservative Party of Canada candidate Gloria Kovach had a previous engagement and could not attend was met with a scattering of mocking laughter. Kovach's absence from successive all-candidate debates/discussion is clearly viewed by many as a slight against voters who want to hear all political perspectives in the public forums. This forum was sponsored by the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario and the Guelph Wellington Coalition for Social Justice.

Candidates kept a bead on social justice issues throughout.

Left out of a Sept. 10 candidate discussion on proportional representation, Tristan Dineen of the Communist Party of Canada, made a good case for his inclusion in future debates, articulating party ideas that had audience members taking notice, and candidates like the Green Party's Gord Miller expressing agreement.

Dineen said there can be no social justice in Canada without equality of aboriginal people in this country, and he called Canada a "prison house of nations," a provocative perspective that provoked some gasps for audience members. Dineen held his ground, saying there must be a "serious move toward real substantive justice for these people."

There is a clear need in the country to once and for all address the injustice and inequality suffered by First Nations people, all candidates agreed.

New Democrat Andrew Seagram said the Government of Canada must negotiate with First Nations on a "nation-to-nation basis," and live up to the terms of treaties that have been signed but repeatedly broken. No Canadian should live in communities with bad water, bad housing and poor health care, as First Nations do in this country, he indicated.

"There is so much rebuilding to do," Liberal Lloyd Longfield said of the relationship between the federal government and First Nations. Negotiations with First Nations have long been carried out in bad faith, he said.

Miller said the trust of First Nations toward the government has been shattered and must be rebuilt.

With no Conservative candidate to defend the record of the Conservative government on international trade agreements, the candidates gave that record a thrashing.

Longfield said the sweeping Trans-Pacific Partnership was negotiated in secret, with no consultation with the provinces. He said the deal, if ratified, would have far-reaching implications for the economy, and a negative impact on Canadian sovereignty.

Andrew Seagram said Trans-Pacific would remove Canadian-content protections on things like cars made in Canada. That would have a "direct impact" on Guelph's economy, he said, reducing the demand for automotive parts manufactured here.

Direct Link: <http://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/5925903-aboriginal-issues-a-focus-of-debate/>

First Nations youth assembly told it's important to vote

[CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 23, 2015 3:53 PM CT Last Updated: Sep 23, 2015 3:53 PM CT



Perry Bellegarde, chief of the Assembly of First Nations, today in Saskatoon. (Guillaume Dumont/SRC)

The importance of voting topped the agenda today at the FSIN Youth Legislative Assembly in Saskatoon.

Activists have been working during this federal election campaign to encourage First Nations people to vote.

Max FineDay is the former president of the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union, and a member of the Sweetgrass First Nation.

"This is a generation that's hungry for change," FineDay said. "They want to see something different. They're not accepting the status quo anymore. They won't allow our communities to not have drinking water. They won't allow mould to be in our homes."

"Our vote matters. Our people matter, our priorities matter" - *Perry Bellegarde, Chief of the Assembly of First Nations*

To change that, young First Nations people will have to get involved in the political process, FineDay said, "making sure that those people who make the laws understand what's happening in our communities, because oftentimes they don't know."

Kyla Henry from Roseau River, Man., said missing and murdered indigenous women will be the top issue for her when she goes to vote.

The chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Perry Bellegarde, was also at today's gathering.

"Our vote matters. Our people matter, our priorities matter, our issues matter," Bellegarde said.

The event wrapped up earlier today.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/first-nations-youth-assembly-told-it-s-important-to-vote-1.3240949>

'I'll hold my nose to vote' says Madahbee

Posted on September 17, 2015 In [News](#)



UOI OFFICES (Nipissing FN) Sept. 17, 2015 – Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Patrick Madahbee says that he'll hold his nose to vote in the Oct. 19 federal election

“Some of our people say they feel uncomfortable voting to elect candidates for other governments than our own. I respect their choice,” says Madahbee. “We all look forward to the day when Canada lives up to the words of its own Constitution and respects a nation-to-nation relationship with us. But, until then, and because the federal government has virtually abandoned First Nations for the past decade, I am personally prepared to ‘hold my nose’ and cast my ballot.

Madahbee says he would rather not participate in Canada’s elections, but is concerned that not taking advantage of a right won by our warriors who fought under Canadian flags could condemn our communities to more legislative assaults against our treaty and inherent rights.

One of the factors that influenced Madahbee’s decision is the lengths to which the Harper government has gone to make it difficult for eligible First Nations citizens to vote on Oct. 19.

Registration

Voters are supposed to be able to check online to see if they are registered to vote Oct. 19, but we have heard of situations where the system is not recognizing on-reserve postal codes.

Identification

New election legislation requires voters to have a piece of government-issued ID that has a photo and address. This excludes Status Cards. Voters without photo ID must present two pieces of identification, one of which includes their address. But many on-reserve homes don’t have street addresses, and lack of adequate housing means some of our citizens don’t have a fixed address of their own.

Elections Canada says First Nations governments can issue letters to their citizens which can serve as one of the two pieces of ID required to vote.

“We are concerned that these kind of barriers could discourage our citizens from voting, and urge Anishinabek leaders to be pro-active about ensuring that community members are included on voters’ lists and supplied with letters of identification from their band offices,” says the Grand Council Chief of 39 First Nations in Ontario.

Before Oct. 19, Madahbee says it is important for Anishinabek leaders to help community members know the positions taken by local candidates and their parties on issues important to First Nations, such as equity in education funding, our rights of consultation and accommodation for resource projects in our territories, a national inquiry into murdered and missing Indigenous women, and measures to reduce the risk of environmental damage to our lands and waterways.

This information can be found in local media election coverage, and is available from analysis developed by the Chiefs of Ontario and Assembly of First Nations. It can be distributed by band newsletters and websites, and social media platforms. Some First

Nations have arranged for area candidates to hold round-table discussions in their community halls which will be streamed live on the internet.

National party leaders have never before paid so much attention to First Nations issues. They believe there will be a larger-than-ever First Nations turnout at the polls, and have seen statistics that indicate our voters could have a major influence in 51 ridings across Canada.

“I encourage all Anishinabek leaders to do what they can to help community members who decide they want to vote to be able to cast informed ballots Oct.19,” says Madahbee.

Everyone can find out if they are registered to vote by visiting the Elections Canada website <http://www.elections.ca/home.aspx>

Election-related information and stories can be found on www.anishinabek.ca and www.anishinabeknews.ca

- See more at: <http://anishinabeknews.ca/2015/09/17/ill-hold-my-nose-to-vote-says-madahbee/#sthash.U7Oz2hbO.dpuf>

Candidates hear call for change, concerns about Aboriginal title

Federal Election

[Christine Wood](#) / Senior Staff Writer

September 24, 2015 11:26 AM



Conservative John Weston, incumbent MP for West Vancouver-Sunshine Coast-Sea to Sky riding.

Candidates on the Sunshine Coast have been getting out to hear from their constituents in advance of next month's all-candidates meetings – and while those challenging incumbent Conservative MP John Weston say they are hearing that the public wants change, Weston said he's getting a very different message at the door.



Larry Koopman, NDP.

“I have been knocking on hundreds of doors in the riding and the number one thing that people raise on the doorstep is their desire to defeat Stephen Harper,” said NDP candidate Larry Koopman.

Green Candidate Ken Melamed agreed.



Ken Melamed, Green Party.

“From what people say at town hall meetings and on the doorstep, the thing that most people on the Coast want is a change in government, because John Weston and the Harper Conservatives have let us down,” Melamed said.

“Our community wants a government they can trust to protect the environment while building an economy that shares prosperity with all Canadians,” said Liberal candidate Pamela Goldsmith-Jones.



Pamela Goldsmith-Jones, Liberal.

All three pointed the finger at Weston and the Conservatives as the number one concern for Sunshine Coast voters. Weston, however, said he has been hearing most from constituents about their “concern over Aboriginal land title and how this is coming into conflict with individual property owners.”

“This is especially the case in Pender Harbour as it relates to foreshore leases,” Weston said.

“As a co-founder of the Constitutional Foundation, I have always believed in equality for all Canadians, guided by one constitution, with equal legal protection for all. While the constitution and our laws require full consultation with Aboriginal communities, no group ought to exercise veto rights over the rights of other Canadians.”



Carol-Lee Chapman, Marxist-Leninist Party.

The only other candidate registered to run in the West Vancouver-Sunshine Coast-Sea to Sky riding is Carol-Lee Chapman for the Marxist-Leninist Party (MLPC) of Canada.

Chapman suggested the number one concern of constituents is “how to overcome marginalization.”

“The MLPC addresses this concern by calling for a new direction for the economy, renewal of the political process and making Canada a factor for peace in the world by electing an anti-war government,” Chapman said.

Weston, Goldsmith-Jones, Melamed and Koopman all plan to continue knocking on doors and talking with constituents right up until the Oct. 19 election.

The four candidates also said they are planning to attend as many all-candidates meetings as possible in October to meet more people and get their platforms out to the voters.

Chapman said she would “encourage people to visit our website” in order to engage constituents.

Find out more about the candidates and their platforms at: Kenmelamed.ca, www.Re-electjohnweston.ca, www.Larrykoopman.ndp.ca, www.Pamgoldsmithjones.liberal.ca and www.mlpc.ca

- See more at: <http://www.coastreporter.net/news/local-news/candidates-hear-call-for-change-concerns-about-aboriginal-title-1.2068204#sthash.WLmjAwzU.dpuf>

Congress of Aboriginal People to elect a new leader

By Kerry Benjoe, Leader-Post September 24, 2015



On Friday, delegates from CAP’s provincial affiliates will meet in Gatineau, Que., as part of its annual general assembly to identify policy resolutions and to elect a new leader. Current National Chief Betty Ann Lavallee is leaving her second four-year term a year early.

REGINA — It may not be the election everyone is watching, but on Friday the new leader of the Congress of Aboriginal People (CAP) will be selected and there is a strong chance that leader will be from Saskatchewan.

The candidates include Regina resident Chigal Wightman Daniels, Saskatoon's Kim Beaudin and Dwight Dorey from Nova Scotia.

On Friday, delegates from CAP's provincial affiliates will meet in Gatineau, Que., as part of its annual general assembly to identify policy resolutions and to elect a new leader.

Current National Chief Betty Ann Lalavallee is stepping down to spend more time with her family, leaving her second four-year term a year early.

Beaudin, president of the Saskatchewan Coalition of Aboriginal People, could not be more excited about the possibility of having the new leader of CAP be from Saskatchewan.

"All I want is a better future for our people in this country," he said.

CAP was founded in 1971 as the Native Council of Canada (NCC) and established to represent the interests of Metis and non-status Indians.

In 1993, CAP extended its constituency to include all off-reserve status and non-status Indians, Metis and southern Inuit people.

The organization was once lead by suspended Conservative Senator Patrick Brazeau. After his departure, Lalavallee was elected as chief and then re-elected in 2012.

"I believe that CAP has lost its way, so we need to focus the organization back to what it is and that's a political advocacy organization," said Beaudin.

He said there has been too much division between CAP and other indigenous organizations and that needs to stop.

"I certainly would reach out," said Beaudin. "Wouldn't it be great to have two national leaders, dealing with government, both from Saskatchewan?"

In addition to mending bridges, he said there are other things that need attention. Next month, the Harry W. Daniels versus the Crown is to be heard by the Supreme Court of Canada. The case will decide whether or not Metis people will have the same rights as a Status Indian in Canada.

Beaudin said the impact can be huge and CAP needs to keep on top of it.

Fellow CAP candidate Daniels is also watching the court case closely because it involves her father.

According to her biography, she is a Licensed Practical Nurse, an educator and a board member of the Newo Yotina Friendship Centre.

If elected, she plans to focus on issues that affect aboriginal people nationwide, prepare the outcome of the Daniels case and reach out to the grassroots community.

Dorey, the third candidate, is a Mi'kmaq who was born and raised in Nova Scotia and has experience serving as a chief both provincially and nationally.

He established an aboriginal relations consulting company in 2006, written two books and is a recipient of the Aboriginal Order of Canada.

The new national chief will likely be named by Friday afternoon and will assume the role immediately.

Direct Link:

<http://www.leaderpost.com/congress+aboriginal+people+elect+leader/11385368/story.html>

NDP Metis candidate with cool name has a tough challenge

[Investigates](#), [National News](#) | September 23, 2015 by [Todd Lamirande](#)



Fritz Bitz (right) with fellow NDP Aboriginal candidate Katherine Swampy APTN National News

If having a rhyming name meant electoral success, Fritz Bitz would win [Edmonton-Wetaskiwin](#) hands down. However, she will have to overcome a legacy of people voting blue in that part of Alberta. The Conservative incumbent is [Mike Lake](#), [Jacqueline Biollo](#) is the Liberal candidate, and [Joy-Ann Hut](#) for the Greens. Bitz used to own and operate a gas station before going back to school for a degree in social work. And has, in fact, been a social worker for the past 14 years. [According to her bio](#), Bitz has sat on several boards

over the years, including the Métis Employment Centre at the Métis Nation of Alberta, and Ii Paa Taa Pii Calgary Urban Aboriginal Suicide Intervention Committee.



Bitz is a proud Metis woman who [sported her sash at the nomination meeting](#) where she won last month. The meeting itself was not without its controversy as Syed Hyder Ali held a protest outside. The NDP dropped him as a candidate because of comments he made [on his Facebook page](#) where he said the state of Israel was guilty of war crimes. “I was treated like an alien. I was discommunicated,” Ali said. “I made those comments because I’m a human rights activist. I did not make those comments because I’m a Muslim.” Despite this, Ali participated in the vote and told his supporters to get behind Bitz. In her acceptance speech she told those gathered that she believes the riding is winnable for the NDP. “We win this riding, like I said, it’s not going to be with a pile of money we can throw around,” Bitz said. “We will win this riding on our feet, day and night. We have to be out there talking to people, knocking on doors, phoning, printing up as many things as we can and getting up signs.”

In a short Q & A [with the Edmonton Metro](#), she explained why she is trying to make the jump to federal politics. I am running because I am concerned about what is happening to our country. I am concerned about basically the state of our democracy. What got me moving and prepared to put my name was actually Bill C51.”

So far, one of the major issues [she’s commented on](#) in her riding is the high cost of child care. Bitz says the NDP plan of \$15 a day childcare will help. “The families who are living in the working class and the poor families, are the ones it’s going to impact the most.”

Bitz has already [admitted on Facebook](#) that a lack of funds to campaign with has put her at a disadvantage, which will make a difficult job even more so. Edmonton-Wetaskiwin is a new riding created out of three others that have all voted in Conservative candidates by very wide margins in 2011. Fritz Bitz has the name recognition but it will probably not be enough to lead her to victory.

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/09/23/ndp-metis-candidate-with-cool-name-has-a-tough-challenge-2/>

Long-time municipal politician Vance Badawey wants federal seat

[Investigates](#) | September 18, 2015 by [APTN Investigates](#)



Former Port Colborne mayor [Vance Badawey](#) is battling Conservative [Leanna Villella](#), Green Party candidate [David Clow](#), and NDP incumbent [Malcolm Allen](#). He is running for the Liberals in the southern Ontario riding of [Niagara Centre](#).

Born and raised in Port Colborne, which sits on Lake Erie, Badawey entered municipal politics as a councillor in 1994, when he was just 29. He was elected Mayor of Port Colborne just three years later. He left municipal politics in 2003 to run unsuccessfully as a provincial Liberal candidate. He was once again elected mayor in 2006 and stepped down a year ago for an unsuccessful bid for a seat on the Niagara regional council.

Badawey wants to bring Niagara-Centre back into the Liberal fold. The riding, since being created in 1997, had been Liberal red until 2008 when Allen captured it for the NDP. "I think it goes beyond party politics. It's 2015," he said [after winning the nomination in June](#). "Everyone flies their colours, but we have to stop and say, who can do the best job?"

And in fact jobs will be at the forefront for this area of the Niagara peninsula as several factories in the area have closed down over the past twenty years. Just one of them is Union Carbide, where its former land holdings now sit vacant. "We want to get those lands back into production," he said [earlier this month](#). And is proposing a free trade zone for goods coming over the border from New York state.



Badawey self identifies as Metis. However, Aboriginal issues have not become an election issue, which is somewhat understandable since the closest First Nation is Six Nations, an hour's drive away. A local [newspaper article from 2011 mentioned](#) that there are 300 Metis families, including Badawey, who live in the area. One of the few times an Indigenous issue raised its head in the riding has been during the past two years. And it is over the controversial harvest of deer in Short Hills Provincial Park by some members of Six Nations based upon the [1701 Nanfan Treaty](#).

The only time Badawey was involved in the hunting issue was at a Niagara Region council meeting when he moved to curb further discussions by local politicians to end the hunt. Some of them cited safety concerns as a reason to end it. According to the [St. Catherine's Standard](#): “For me, it’s simply a matter of public safety. There does not appear to be any way to make this hunt safe,’ (St. Catharines Councillor, Bruce Timms) said.

“After Timms spoke, Port Colborne Mayor Vance Badawey, seconded by Lincoln Mayor Bill Hodgson, moved to limit talk on the motion by asking the chair to put it to a vote.

“‘Are you serious?’ St. Catharines Coun. Andy Petrowski said when the majority of the committee agreed with Badawey. ‘That is brutal.’

“‘Keep the soapbox for the lobby,’ Badawey to Petrowski.”

The Short Hills hunt, however, does not appear to be an election issue.

Badawey is clearly hoping his long experience in municipal politics translates to success on the federal stage. But as mentioned earlier, NDP'er Malcolm Allen has won the riding in the last two elections. They have been very narrow victories over Conservative opponents, by 300 votes in 2008 and by just over a 1000 votes in 2011 against Leanna Villella, who is running once again this time around.

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/09/18/long-time-municipal-politician-vance-badawey-wants-federal-seat/>

Lakeland candidates caught in forum date debate

By [James Wood](#), [Peter Lozinski](#), QMIAgency

Friday, September 18, 2015 5:19:25 MDT PM



NPD candidate Duane Zaraska, Liberal candidate Garry Parenteau, and Conservative candidate Shannon Stubbs are pictured in a composite photo.

A disagreement over debate dates has left candidates in the Lakeland riding in the lurch.

According to a press release issued by Nancy Mereska, the Central Region campaign coordinator for the Lakeland NDP, an all-candidates forum was scheduled by two different organizations within the riding on the same date. Both the Mannawanis Friendship Centre in St. Paul, and the Bonnyville Chamber of Commerce put their events on the calendar for Oct. 5, which left a conflict between the two dates.

A second forum in St. Paul, put together by the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce, will be taking place on Sept. 29.

The release says that the organizer for the Mannawanis event, Jim White, reached out to candidates on Sept. 3, and secured the presence of both NDP candidate Duane Zaraska and Liberal candidate Garry Parenteau. However, the release states that when the Bonnyville Chamber of Commerce was contacted in order to sort out the conflict, they refused to change their date, despite having contacted candidates on Sept. 9.

Mereska ends the release by stating that she spoke with Elections Canada about the matter, and registered a formal complaint.

“We feel this is pure discrimination against the indigenous communities of the St. Paul/Bonnyville areas,” said Mereska.

Parenteau and Zaraska, who are both Metis, have confirmed that they were set on attending the Mannawanis debate.

“I committed to that one first,” said Zaraska.

“They were the first one that had contacted any of the candidates. It was early September when they contacted me, and they told me that they had made every effort to contact the other people at the same time.”

Parenteau echoed his challenger in his response.

“I think we have a commitment, and I did have a commitment to the St. Paul Friendship Centre on September 3, and I prefer to stand behind my commitments,” he said.

“I don’t want to start off by making promises and not keeping them. I think if there is a commitment made, you follow those commitments.”

Zaraska said that while he had spoken to the Bonnyville Chamber of Commerce once, it was another person on his team that called back to the organization about the debate.

“I’ve only talked to the receptionist there once, actually, she said that they weren’t able to change the dates,” said Zaraska.

Zaraska distanced himself from the release sent out by Mereska.

“Somebody else on my team had contacted them, I think kind of blew things out of proportion, the way I see it now, because it wasn’t my feelings,” he said. “The only feelings I have is I think we could have worked out another date and I think we should have worked out another date, Especially when it was so long ago and we had the time. That’s all.”

“I think it does (put me in an awkward spot) a little bit. Again, it wasn’t my feelings, it was the feelings on someone on my team who has worked hard, long hours under stress and probably emotions took over better judgement. That’s all it was. It’s nothing at all against the chamber.”

Conservative candidate Shannon Stubbs campaign manager Tyson Phillips provided a statement via email regarding her involvement with the Bonnyville forum, saying that all First Nations and Metis residents of the riding are invited to attend.

“She looks forward to participating in the forum hosted by the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce that is open to all residents of St. Paul, as well as the surrounding rural area and First Nations and Metis communities in the region. She is also thankful to the Bonnyville Chamber of Commerce for organizing an all candidates forum in which she will be happy to participate, to extend the same opportunity to residents in Bonnyville and the area, as well as to any other residents and First Nations and Metis across Lakeland who may wish to attend.”

In response to why the invitation from Mannawanis was declined, Phillips provided a statement indicating that the Stubbs campaign is prioritizing certain forums in order to reach the most residents.

“Given both Shannon's busy campaign schedule and pre existing commitments, as well as the vast geographical area and that there are more than 75 communities across Lakeland, Shannon is participating in one forum per community, where organized, in areas across the riding to reach and accommodate as many residents as possible. Again, the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce forum is free and open to the public across Lakeland, to all residents of St. Paul, as well as to the surrounding rural area and First Nations and Metis communities in the region.”

When this response was relayed to Jim White, organizer of the Mannawanis forum, he said that he never recieved a response from the Stubbs campaign after notifying candidates on Sept 3.

“The Conservatives were sent all the information with times, places, all that information was sent a week before Bonnyville even started calling candidates,” said White.

“The NDP and the Liberals agreed to attend ours, and a week later we get a call from Bonnyville, and they told them that they were already committed to ours. I don't see where the conflict arises except that they're (the Bonnyville Chamber of Commerce) being immovable and they somehow think that the aboriginal people don't have any say in this, or shouldn't have any say in this or shouldn't participate, and it really bugs me.”

Bonnyville Chamber of Commerce president Robyn Ducharme said that though there's nothing wrong with the Friendship Centre wanting to host a forum, it's "unfortunate that they chose the same date that we had chose."

Ducharme said it had been a while after they sent out the invitations when they found out about the conflict. She said that the chamber couldn't move the date because they couldn't find one that worked for everybody.

" We have a large riding ... we had a lot of chamber of commerce communities to work with to plan all our dates, so we contacted all of the chambers of commerce to make sure that we were all choosing dates to make sure we would all be able to have all the candidates at each one of our forums," she said.

"We did contemplate changing the dates, but when we started looking at other dates that are available, and looking at all the different candidates - we're talking about four candidates, short election campaign time periods, and all the demands and all the directions that they're all pulled in. It really wasn't feasible to change the date at all at that time.

"Unfortunately there are now two forums on one day, and there's really no wiggle room to be able to change that around."

Direct Link: <http://www.meridianbooster.com/2015/09/18/lakeland-candidates-caught-in-forum-date-debate>

Aboriginal Sports

Mohawk soccer players to represent Canada at World Indigenous Games



CTV Montreal

Published Saturday, September 19, 2015 2:11PM EDT

Last Updated Saturday, September 19, 2015 6:47PM EDT

A group of young Mohawk women are preparing to represent Canada on the soccer pitch at the end of October, when more than 2,000 athletes from 30 countries will converge in Brazil for the first World Indigenous Games.

"I've always dreamed of it, but now that the dream is actually coming true it's a little unbelievable," said 19-year-old player Wynonna Cross.

Most of the 20-player team is based in Vancouver, but Cross and eight other young women from Mohawk communities near Montreal have been selected for the Canadian team at the inaugural event.

"That's what's the biggest thing is, for the doors to be opened, for not only these girls but the future generations," said assistant coach Harry Rice.

The World Indigenous Games begin in Brazil Oct. 23. Many of the players are excited to compete against other aboriginal athletes from different countries.



Nine young women from Mohawk communities near Montreal have been selected for the Canadian team at the inaugural event.

“I’m excited to hear about their traditions, and their values and everything, It’s more than you can learn in a textbook or school,” said 18-year-old player Rachel Leborgne.

Most of the Mohawk players on the team have known each other for years, but have had limited time to practice with their western Canadian teammates. Cross, for example, has yet to meet them.

“It’s the first season I’m playing with these girls as well. And once we just started together we really just play as a team, so I’m expecting the same when we get there, just meet the girls and be able to play as a team,” she said.

Win or lose, Leborne is ready for the experience.

“I love the sport and I’m playing for fun, so as long as I’m with my teammates and having a good time, that will be enough for me,” said Leborgne.

The team has organized several fundraising efforts to help them get to Brazil, because the cost per player is about \$1,700 for travel. They leave Oct. 17.

Direct Link: <http://montreal.ctvnews.ca/mohawk-soccer-players-to-represent-canada-at-world-indigenous-games-1.2571383>

First Nations women’s soccer team heads to Brazil for World Indigenous Games

[CTV National News: Chasing soccer dreams](#)



A soccer team made up of First Nations women will represent Canada in the world's first Indigenous Games. Vanessa Lee reports.

CTVNews.ca Staff

Published Saturday, September 19, 2015 10:00PM EDT

Less than a year before athletes will flock to Rio De Janeiro for the 2016 Summer Olympics, a Canadian team of First Nations women is gearing up for their own chance to compete on the international stage.

An all-aboriginal group of elite soccer players is heading for Palmas, Brazil in October for the first-ever World Indigenous Games, where they will join 2,000 athletes from 30 different countries, in a celebration of sport and aboriginal heritage.

For many of the players, the tournament will be one of the most important competitions of their lives.

“I feel overwhelmed with excitement and it’s huge,” Wynonna Cross told CTV News. “I never expected to be part of something this big.”

The girls come from across the country, and each player earned her spot after being scouted at a series of tournaments.

Leading up to the World Indigenous Games, half of the players have gathered near Montreal to train. The other half will join the team in Palmas, where they will practice together for the first time.

“It’s the first season playing with these girls,” Rachel Leborgne said. “And once we started playing together we just really started playing as a team, so I’m expecting the same thing when we get there.”

Leborgne, a Mohawk from Kahnawake, Que., said that, beyond soccer, the games will be an opportunity for the Canadian players to show off their heritage.

“Following those traditions and everything, it’s something that just comes to me,” she said. “Being able to represent that somewhere and show everyone else what we are and who we are is going to be something else.”

From the sidelines, Coach Harry Rice said he is also thrilled at the chance to be part of an international tournament.

Rice has taught some the players since they were children. He said that many First Nations athletes have limited opportunities, and that he never dreamed his players would be able to play on the world stage.

“Their talent is going to be broadcast for the world to see,” he said. “It’s exciting.”

For Leborgne, the tournament is also a chance to set an example for other aspiring indigenous athletes.

“I know everyone looks up to us, so it’s nerve-racking being in this position” she said. “But I’m really excited to show them what we’ve got.”

Direct Link: <http://www.ctvnews.ca/sports/first-nations-women-s-soccer-team-heads-to-brazil-for-world-indigenous-games-1.2571955>

Energy, the Environment & Natural Resources

Pipeline perspectives: two points of view

By [Brandon Gonez](#) Reporter Global News, September 17, 2015 9:03 pm



REGINA – The national pipeline debate continued in Regina Thursday where energy executives from across the country continued a three day meeting at the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association (CEPA) conference.

The conference featured two prominent Saskatchewan leaders who have two very different outlooks on how the future of that sector should unfold.

“We need to work together to partner and to grow the economy not only across Canada but for First Nations people as well,” says Perry Bellegarde, the National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations.

Bellegarde stressed to industry leaders that First Nations are rights holders and not merely stakeholders, something he described as a vitally important distinction.

But Bellegarde had a welcoming message too: “I’m also aware of the common perception that First Nations are categorically opposed to development. That’s not true,” explained Bellegarde.

It’s a marked change in tone from when Bellegarde was first elected AFN chief.

“With our ownership of the resources and jobs for our people. It will be done on our terms and our timeline,” [said Bellegarde at his election ceremony in 2014.](#)

Meanwhile, Premier Brad Wall focused his comments on praising work the energy industry has already done.

“We need to say ‘thank you’ and we need to celebrate the industry, and we need to do this in increasingly public ways,” said Wall.

Wall pointed out the \$18 billion collected in royalties and taxes last year and the immediate need for pipeline expansion.

“If we don’t get the oil to Atlantic Canada or to either coast, we’re never going to have energy independence with all of this oil we have in the country. It’s not even possible,” said Wall.

Absent in Wall’s speech was any reference to First Nations issues, something industry leaders were eager to hear about from both speakers.

“I wouldn’t want to comment specifically on the operations of your association,” said Wall, when asked by an industry executive for advice.

“Make the investments now on education and training,” Bellegarde said when asked by the same executive what would be the number one thing CEPA could do as an association to engage First Nations partners.

The CEPA Foundation has confirmed that they will be extending an invite to more aboriginal business leaders for next year’s fall conference.

Direct Link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2227429/pipeline-perspectives-two-points-of-view/>

“Extreme oil” film to feature North Baffin hunters, anti-seismic activists

“The animals have been our lifeblood for thousands of years. It needs to stay that way”

LISA GREGOIRE, September 21, 2015 - 7:00 am



Bryan Simonee, in silhouette with seal hook, in June 2014 during filming of "To the Ends of the Earth," a new documentary by "White Water, Black Gold" filmmaker David Lavallee. (PHOTO COURTESY DAVID LAVALLEE)



Qajaq Ellsworth with jerry cans, in Sam Ford Fiord near Clyde River. He said this was a good picture because it shows Inuit dependence on fossil fuels. (PHOTO COURTESY DAVID LAVALLEE)



David Lavallee, Nelson-based filmmaker, during a spring 2014 trip to north Baffin to film a new documentary on the extremes of energy extraction called To the Ends of the Earth. (PHOTO COURTESY DAVID LAVALLEE)

Bryan Simonee is a housing maintainer in Pond Inlet and a hunter of many animals, big and small.

He is also 31 and a father of four and knows that communities need jobs and economic development.

But Simonee also knows that jobs and companies come and go in the Arctic as they always have, but the land and sea have always provided food and materials to make things and to earn a living.

Preserving that source of food and income into the future, and the harvesting way of life that goes with it, is kind of like an insurance policy for Inuit, he says.

And so when Simonee's friend Qajaq Ellsworth in Iqaluit asked him if he wanted to be part of a film project on extreme oil exploration by B.C.-based documentary filmmaker David Lavallée, Simonee agreed.

"We had a nice trip to the floe edge, saw lots of narwhals. I like what he's trying to do, protect the whales," said Simonee.

"The animals have been our lifeblood for thousands of years. It needs to stay that way."

Lavallée, a former school teacher and mountain guide turned filmmaker, is probably best known for his award-winning 2011 documentary *White Water, Black Gold* which explored the battle between water and oil in Alberta's water-dependent tar sands.

The film solidified his views on the environmental cost of oil extraction in Canada and prompted him to consider another project soon afterward.

The crux of his new film is this: as the planet's oil and gas reserves get depleted, companies must go further afield, dig deeper underground and make huge infrastructure and logistical investments to get at those reserves.

To the Ends of the Earth, which is currently in the editing stages with a projected 2016 release, argues that it now costs more, in energy and investment, to find and capture hydrocarbons than what those hydrocarbons are actually worth once refined.

"It's often assumed in Canada that the tar sands are economically profitable, a huge amount of profits and benefits to society," said Lavallee. But according to his math, that's untrue.

To the Ends of the Earth makes the comparison to the whaling industry in the late 1800s.

As whales became scarce from over harvesting, whaling companies had to go deeper and deeper into the remote Arctic at great human and financial cost and they did so until those costs outweighed the gain.

Lavallée's film looks at how, after 2005, conventional oil production bottomed out worldwide causing oil and gas companies to shift to more extreme methods and venues — the tar sands, fracking and Arctic exploration.

To highlight the Arctic portion of the film — the potential for spill disasters, for example, and the unpredictable impacts of climate change on sea ice and weather — Lavallee went to Pond Inlet and Clyde River last spring to speak with local hunters and anti-seismic activists such as Clyde River Mayor Jerry Natanine.

That's where he met Simonee.

The Clyde River-born, Pond Inlet-raised Simonee took Lavallee and his crew — which included Ellsworth — out hunting and told them about how important country food is for remote communities.

Simonee said he was disappointed because there were narwhals at the floe edge but he was unable to get one.

Narwhal are difficult to harvest because they are smart, elusive and their hearing is so powerful you have to be silent and patient to get one, Simonee said.

He got a seal instead so Lavallée managed to get some actual harvesting on film. Lavallee said a polar bear came near where they were hunting but Simonee casually shoed it away by shouting at it.

And while it's clear Simonee, Ellsworth and other locals wowed Lavallee with stunning Arctic scenery and taught him a few things about Inuit culture, the education went both ways.

"I support David in his effort to try and show how damaging seismic testing is," said Simonee. "He helped me to understand the effects of it."

Simonee said that Baffinland Iron Mines Corp. has almost daily been shipping iron ore from the Mary River mine out of Milne Inlet, near Pond Inlet, and even from far away, he can hear the roar and rumble of those ship engines.

"I could hear that big deep sound so I can only imagine with the seismic testing, how loud that would be," Simonee said. "I'm sure it's not a positive impact on the whales."

Ellsworth, also a filmmaker who now works for the Government of Nunavut's culture and heritage department, said he enjoyed working with Lavallée and the crew last spring.

There were the usual challenges of filmmaking in the North — scheduling, logistics, weather, dealing with adversity. He said they saw lots of wildlife and that the time they spent out on the land and on the sea was pretty magical.

Ellsworth said it wasn't difficult to find local people willing to talk about seismic testing planned for next summer in Baffin Bay and Davis Strait — something local people in Clyde River are trying to prevent with [a Supreme Court challenge](#).

Mostly, Ellsworth said, people just want more information. They feel like they can't support seismic testing until they see proof that it won't impact whales who rely on sound to forage, communicate, socialize, navigate and avoid predators.

He agrees with them.

"I think we have to be more cautious than we have been. It's great to hear about and understand modern technologies that make these activities safer but I think until we're at point where we are certain about the impact and benefits, then I think need to be cautious," Ellsworth said.

He stressed that he doesn't support or oppose resource development in the Arctic — just that it needs to be done wisely. In the meantime, Inuit ought to explore other economic options, he said.

"Our land and our territory has a lot more to offer than just what's under the ground and under the ocean," he added.

To the Ends of the Earth will likely make the film festival circuit next year along with some theatrical releases. Lavallee said he's also hoping to show it in Nunavut.

And he's hoping his message of extreme oil economics reaches the ears of policy makers so they might consider renewable energy research and development options and expand their view of what future society could look like.

"And I think the best way as a filmmaker I can do that is just to have a bit of a mute voice. Not try to interject my voice into it too much, just let the people speak, the people from the North, describe their experiences," he said.

"We discover the issues through the eyes of the people who are most affected."

You can watch a trailer for *To the Ends of the Earth* [here](#).

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674extreme_oil_film_to_feature_north_baffin_hunters_anti-seismic_activist/

Miley Cyrus talks wolves with B.C.'s First Nations

Wolves reducing caribou in some areas to point of near extinction, government spokesperson says. American singer Cyrus asked her followers to sign petition to stop killings.



Singer Miley Cyrus says she knew in heart that British Columbia's wolf cull was wrong, but after a visit to the province's central coast, she's confident her instincts are backed by science.

By: Dirk Meissner The Canadian Press, Published on Mon Sep 21 2015

VICTORIA—British Columbia is aiming to increase the number of wolves it kills this winter in the second year of a plan to save endangered caribou, prompting criticism from celebrities and renewed debate over the controversial strategy. And pop singer Miley Cyrus does not like it.

The wolf cull is the best shot to protect threatened caribou from extinction, say caribou experts and government officials, who admit it will take years to determine if the science behind killing wolves works.

“It’s like trying to dial a radio station in with boxing gloves on,” said Tom Ethier, an assistant deputy minister at B.C.’s Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, which oversees the cull. “We’re really trying to figure out: does this work?”

The government planned to kill about 200 wolves last winter, but a low snowpack and bad weather made the hunt difficult, he said. Sharpshooters in helicopters killed 84 wolves in B.C.’s northeast and southeast regions, Ethier said.

Wolves are preying on the herds, reducing some caribou in those areas to the point of near extinction, he said.

“We did not meet our goal, so this year there could be more wolves removed,” Ethier said.

Both Miley Cyrus and Pamela Anderson have recently criticized the hunt. On Friday, Anderson called on B.C. Premier Christy Clark to find a better solution to save caribou than the slaughter of wolves.

Cyrus travelled to B.C. this weekend to discuss the wolf cull with First Nations in the small central coast community of Klemtu. A video was posted on YouTube of her travelling in a boat with locals and joining them in song.

Earlier this month Cyrus asked her Instagram followers to sign a Pacific Wild petition to stop the killings. The petition has since grown to almost 200,000 signatures.

In response to Cyrus, Clark said she didn't think the American singer knew enough about B.C.'s environmental plan to save caribou herds to be jumping into the debate.

"If we need help on our twerking policy in the future, perhaps we can go and seek her advice," said Clark, who suggested Cyrus stick to her signature dance move.

But conservation scientist Chris Darimont of the University of Victoria said Cyrus is expressing what many people feel about the wolf cull.

"Despite her not being a particularly informed advocate, she's thinking clearly on this issue, and that is probably like many British Columbians, that at a sort of gut level they are opposed to wolf control," he said.

The South Selkirk caribou herd had just 18 animals in March 2014, down from 46 in 2009, the government stated. There are about 950 caribou in seven herds in the northeast, with wolves responsible for 40 per cent of deaths in four of those herds.

"This is why we need to act," Ethier said. "In five years, we're hoping to turn it around and hoping it tells us this technique works. Obviously, we would prefer choices that are not as striking as this one, and not so loaded emotionally."

The ethical dilemma forces the government to either kill wolves in an attempt to save a species or do nothing and leave the caribou.

Darimont said successive governments have permitted forest, oil and gas and other resource companies to destroy and encroach on caribou habitat, and now that some herds are on the brink of extinction, wolves are made the scapegoat.

"It's a desperate, last-minute Hail Mary attempt to avoid what really ought to be done and that is slow down and stop habitat destruction in caribou habitat," he said.

Since 2007, the province's mountain caribou recovery program has protected 2.2-million hectares of habitat in the South Selkirk, and in 2012 the government protected about 400,000 hectares of habitat in the South Peace.

Alberta government caribou expert Dave Hervieux said a 10-year wolf cull in Alberta worked, but it resulted in the deaths of about 1,000 wolves to save the Little Smoky caribou herd.

Direct Link: <http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2015/09/21/wolf-cull-caribou-mile-cyrus-bc-wolves.html>

First Nations interrupt Energy East pipeline consultation

[Christopher Curtis, Montreal Gazette](#)

Published on: September 24, 2015 | Last Updated: September 24, 2015 3:51 PM EDT



Indigenous protesters shut down a public consultation over the Energy East pipeline at a downtown Montreal office building, on Wednesday Sept. 23, 2015. Courtesy of submedia.tv

Indigenous protesters interrupted a public consultation over the Energy East pipeline Wednesday night at an office building in downtown Montreal.

Amanda Lickers says she was accompanied by about 25 people when she entered the meeting and interrupted proceedings.

“We told them that a pipeline will not pass through unceded (Mohawk) territory,” said Lickers, whose family is from Six Nations of the Grand River, in Ontario. “This project is in violation of our Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) principals and it violates a law that predates the colonial occupation of Canada.”

Though there are First Nations who support the \$12 billion, 4,600 kilometre pipeline, a grassroots, indigenous resistance movement is gaining momentum across Canada. The project is [set to pass through over 150 traditional aboriginal territories](#) and some chiefs — like Kanesatake’s Serge Simon — say they’re prepared to set up blockades in its path.

In the meantime, the National Energy Board, which regulates Canada’s pipelines, is in the early stages of the public consultation process over the project. Wednesday’s meeting was hosted by the Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal and feature the city’s

environmental assessment board. The goal was to getting citizens' and professionals' input for a report to be presented during the NEB's Energy East hearings next year.

But many, including Liberal Party leader Justin Trudeau, question the objectivity of the NEB given that at least half of its board members were once employed by the energy sector.

Lickers said that while the interruption was peaceful with some of the participants walking out of the Mansfield St. building joined the protesters in chanting, "No consent, no pipelines," as they exited the room. She says there was about 50 people at the meeting.

No arrests were made and consultation meetings are set to continue next week in Laval. Things may not be easier there given that mayor Marc Demers denounced the pipeline just two weeks ago.

Demers cited environmental concerns for his opposition to the project, inviting other municipalities to join suit.

Direct Link: <http://montrealgazette.com/news/local-news/first-nations-interrupt-pipeline-consultation>

Land Claims & Treaty Rights

N.B. First Nations to develop land for blueberry harvesting



Doctors say that chemicals in blueberries may help boost corneal health (Elena Elisseeva / Shutterstock.com)

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Published Saturday, September 19, 2015 1:02PM ADT

BURNT CHURCH, N.B. - The New Brunswick government says the completion of a bridge on Esgenoopetitj First Nation will allow the community to develop nearly 250 hectares of land for blueberry harvesting.

Agriculture Minister Rick Doucet says the reserve land is located in one of the province's major wild blueberry producing regions.

He says developing the land will create jobs and support the local economy.

The government provided \$247,000 in funding for the bridge.

Direct Link: <http://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/n-b-first-nations-to-develop-land-for-blueberry-harvesting-1.2571275>

Dudley George's brother in serious condition after being accidentally set on fire

WARNING: This story contains graphic material

The Canadian Press Posted: Sep 20, 2015 4:08 PM ET Last Updated: Sep 20, 2015 8:32 PM ET



Dudley George's brother, Perry (Pierre) Neil Watson George, was protesting a settlement deal in southwestern Ontario when the fire accident happened. (Tony Pitts/Port Huron Times Herald/Canadian Press)



What was supposed to be a day of celebration for members of the Kettle Point First Nation was marred by a scene of chaos, anger and pain as the brother of slain protester Dudley George was burned at the side of a gas-soaked protest fire.

Kettle Point members were holding a four-kilometre walk on Sunday from their land, near Sarnia, Ont., to the site of a former army camp that's scheduled to be returned to the band. The walk was meant to celebrate the agreement with Ottawa for the land, which was meant to unite different factions within the band and give compensation to elders and their families who were moved to make way for the base during the Second World War.

Some descendants of the 16 families from the army camp lands, known as Stony Point, set a protest fire in front of the camp gatehouse. Other band members tried to put out the fire with small water containers, and onlookers say Perry (Pierre) Neil Watson George, 61, was trying to pour a portable gas can on the fire to re-ignite it when the can fell and flames rushed up his arms and across his chest.

Some said he caught fire when the can was kicked back at him. Quickly removing his shirt, George was walking and talking to supporters while an ambulance was called.

George was to be taken from a Sarnia hospital to a burn unit in London, Ont., with second-degree burns on his hands, ears, and neck, according to Jesse Oliver, a Stony Pointer who helped him set the protest fire. The two set the fire to show not all band members support the agreement.

Ontario Provincial Police say they are investigating the incident. They describe George's burns as serious, but not life-threatening.

Brother shot by police in 1995

George's brother, Dudley George, was shot and killed by police when a splinter group of about 30 members of the Kettle and Stony Point First Nation occupied nearby Ipperwash Provincial Park in September 1995, claiming it contained a sacred burial ground.

The First Nation announced Saturday that it had ratified an agreement that includes a financial settlement in excess of \$90 million, the return of land appropriated by the

federal government in 1942 under the War Measures Act and a cleanup of Stony Point lands.

The Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation is located along the shores of Lake Huron, 35 kilometres northeast of Sarnia, Ont.

Chief Thomas Bressette said Saturday that now that the negotiation process is complete, the First Nation can focus on healing and strengthening community relations.

Bressette has promised payments to all band members with larger amounts to the Stony Point elders and their descendants.

Chief accused of buying votes

Some Stony Pointers, however, have accused Bressette of buying band members' votes by offering \$5,000 to every band member whether they have Stony Point ancestry or not.

The vote, held almost 20 years to the day after Dudley George's shooting death by a provincial police sniper, was passed "overwhelmingly" Friday, according to a news release from the Kettle Point band.

In spite of his support for the agreement, Bressette told reporters before Sunday's incident the deal is inadequate.

"If people analyzed this deal they would see how badly we've been treated by the government of this county," he said, describing it as "bittersweet" for his people.

He said the deal is unfair because it does not include money for a "healing package" that would pay for therapists and traditional healers to help those traumatized by the original removal and events surrounding the death of Dudley George in 1995.

WARNING: The image below contains graphic material.



George was taken to hospital — conscious and walking — but there is no immediate word on his condition. (Dave Chidley/Canadian Press)

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/pierre-george-ipperwash-fire-1.3236095>

Give indigenous people veto power over development on their lands, report urges

Resource companies join with conservationists to urge 'free, prior and informed consent'

[CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 21, 2015 1:18 PM ET Last Updated: Sep 21, 2015 2:06 PM ET



Chief Roger William, right, of the Xeni Gwet'in First Nation is flanked by chiefs and other officials after the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in favour of the Tsilhqot'in First Nation, granting it land title to 438,000

hectares of land. That ruling is helping to define consent over use of aboriginal lands. (Darryl Dyck/Canadian Press)

A coalition of resource companies, financial institutions, First Nations and conservation organizations has recommended that aboriginal bands have veto power over development on their traditional lands.

The Boreal Leadership Council – which includes resources companies such as Suncor Energy, Goldcorp and Tembec – [released a report Monday](#) that sets out recommendations for engagement with First Nations by business and government.

"Free, prior, and informed consent – the right of Indigenous peoples to offer or withhold consent to development that may have an impact on their territories or resources – is the key to development, not a barrier," said Boreal Leadership Council member Robert Walker of NEI Investments.

Chris McDonell of Tembec said it is a "prevailing myth" in Canada that there is nothing but conflict between resource development and indigenous communities

Treaty rights are protected under the Constitution, but there is confusion over how this should play out in resource development, the council said.

Landmark Supreme Court decision

The Supreme Court of Canada's 2014 Tsilhqot'in decision is defining the direction the law is taking as, in addition to granting title, it states the First Nation has the right to decide how the land will be used and authority to manage the land and its economic benefits.

Industry groups, including mining, petroleum and forestry organizations, have attempted to respond to the ruling, urging members to obtain consent and engage early with communities that might be affected by their projects.

The Forest Stewardship Council, a forest certification system, recently recommended a global initiative to incorporate "free, prior and informed consent" from First Nations communities into certification requirements for its companies.

The Boreal Leadership Council has suggested next steps for government, industry and aboriginal communities to encourage a collaborative process that leads to consent.

It says that will speed development in most cases, as it will forestall long and divisive legal cases.

Industry should engage early

The federal government should be working with communities and aboriginal governments to develop legal and policy tools that strengthen decision-making processes, the report said. There also needs to be capacity building to strengthen lands stewardship skills and resources in indigenous communities.

For industry, it recommends early and respectful engagement in any development process.

"While there is no "one size fits all" approach, early engagement can provide a foundation for the necessary working relationships and can provide the opportunity to establish impact benefit agreements that can help guide project development and management," the report said.

The council urged indigenous communities to share the lessons they have learned in working collaboratively on major projects. Among the lessons to be learned are how to structure internal governance and management of their communities in negotiation and implementation phases of development.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/business/give-indigenous-people-veto-power-over-development-on-their-lands-report-urges-1.3237105>

Aboriginal consultations lengthy but necessary step for mine development

By: Jonathan Migneault - Sudbury Northern Life

| Sep 21, 2015 - 6:00 PM |



Ian Horne, KGHM's environment and community manager in Sudbury, addressed the Canadian Institute of Mining Thursday about his years of experience negotiating agreements with local first nations regarding the Victoria Mine's development. Photo by Jonathan Migneault.

KGHM makes progress with Victoria Mine

After many years of groundwork, KGHM's Sudbury operations expect to submit a report to their parent company in Poland by the end of October to approve further development and production of the Victoria Mine, says the company's local environment and community manager.

Ian Horne addressed the Canadian Institute of Mining Thursday about his years of experience negotiating agreements with local first nations regarding the mine's development.

In 2010 the modernized Mining Act required mining companies operating in Ontario to consult with Aboriginal people before they could submit their mine closure plans to the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.

The mine closure plan is a necessary part of any mining project.

“Once you get involved in something like Aboriginal consultation you realize the value and importance of it,” Horne said.

While the First Nations he consulted with all had the same basic priorities – jobs, youth development, education and financial agreements – Horne said the negotiating process turned out to be a long and challenging process.

It took almost five years, for instance, to reach an agreement with the Sagamok First Nation – located 60 kilometres west of the project.

With the Atikameksheng First Nation – which is closest to the Victoria Mine site – negotiations halted for around a year before they resumed again.

“It took that break, almost, for both sides to calm down and understand what they needed to do,” Horne said.

Atikameksheng First Nation Chief Edward Miller said it was important to find solutions to disagreements between his community and KGHM.

“We would rather sit down at a table and start talking, and start seeing those differences,” he said. “Then we can come to a mutual understanding on how to work through those differences.”

But the signed agreement only marks a first step for the ongoing relationship between his community and KGHM, Miller said.

As the project advances and evolves, that relationship will also evolve, he said. On Sept. 2, 2015, KGHM reached a third agreement when it signed a memorandum of understanding with the Métis Nation of Ontario.

While the Métis Nation of Ontario does not have land rights at the mine site, KGHM had

an obligation to consult with the organization on constitutional grounds.

KGHM estimates the Victoria Mine site contains 14.2 million tonnes of resources. The inferred resources include 700 million pounds of copper, 700 million pounds of Nickel and 3.5 million ounces of platinum group elements.

The company expects production of 3,500 tonnes per day once the mine is up and running.

KGHM will spend \$30 million at the mine site this year to fund engineering, sub-collar excavations, a collar foundation, a retaining wall for a sub-station and a mine water pond.

Victoria Mine is expected to employ between 150 and 300 people in full production, KGHM said.

While the company's McCreedy West nickel mine in Levack is scheduled to enter care and maintenance in October, a representative with United Steelworkers Local 2020, which represents KGHM's workers in the Sudbury area, said he doesn't expect that mine's closure to affect the Victoria Mine project.

“I know that Victoria is a big priority for KGHM, and I think that project will still be going ahead,” said Myles Sullivan, an area co-ordinator with the United Steelworkers.

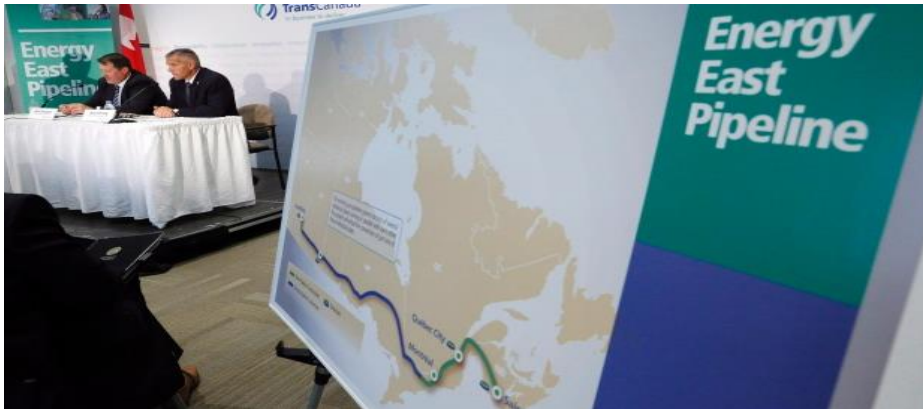
“It's a higher grade deposit (than McCreedy West). It's a very good deposit, and that will be going ahead from what I've been told.”

Direct Link: <http://www.northernlife.ca/news/localNews/2015/09/21-kghm-progress-sudbury.aspx>

First Nations demand halt to Energy East review over funding cut

Woodstock, Madawaska and Tobique First Nations seek more funding for National Energy Board review of pipeline

By Connell Smith, [CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 21, 2015 9:51 AM AT Last Updated: Sep 21, 2015 9:51 AM AT



The Energy East pipeline proposed route is pictured as TransCanada officials spoke to the media earlier this year. (Jeff McIntosh/The Canadian Press)

Three New Brunswick First Nations are calling for a halt to preparations for review hearings on the Energy East pipeline project.

The Woodstock, Madawaska and Tobique First Nations are upset participant funding for interveners has been cut.

The National Energy Board has chopped the maximum funding limit for groups wanting to intervene at the review hearings to \$40,000 from \$80,000.

The announcement has Aboriginal groups and environmental organizations across Canada scrambling.



Renée Pelletier said the NEB's cut to participant funding for the regulatory review of the Energy East project is particularly egregious where First Nations are concerned. (Courtesy: Olthuis Kleer Townshend LLP)

The NEB funding allows interveners to hire scientists, prepare legal briefs and scrutinize documents produced by TransCanada and its supporters.

The pipeline would transport as much as 1.1 million barrels of oil per day from western Canada to eastern refineries and a marine terminal at Saint John's Canaport.

Renée Pelletier, a lawyer who is representing the three Maliseet First Nations, said the cut to participant funding for the regulatory review of the project is particularly egregious where First Nations are concerned.

"To actually participate in a proceeding of that magnitude for \$40,000 is, frankly, ridiculous," said Pelletier, who is a managing partner at Olthuis Kleer Townshend LLP in Toronto.

Pelletier says in the case of Energy East, the federal government has determined the National Energy Board review process will fulfill the constitutional duty to consult First Nations and to accommodate their concerns.

'It feels like the National Energy Board are changing the rules half way through the game.' - *Stephanie Merrill, Conservation Council*

Not doing so, warns Pelletier, would risk the entire project since First Nations in the Maritimes did not cede title to their lands or resources in treaties with the Crown.

"The NEB process is meant to be the vehicle by which consultation with aboriginal communities will take place," said Pelletier.

"They have a constitutional duty, a constitutional obligation, which they have to meet and they're going to have to find the funding somewhere."

The First Nations have asked the Energy East Pipeline review process be put on hold until the issue of aboriginal consultation can be resolved and mechanisms put in place to ensure "adequate funding." The request was made in a letter to the NEB, the federal Department of Natural Resources and to TransCanada.

The National Energy Board received more than 1,800 applications for intervener status.



The National Energy Board received more than 1,800 applications for intervener status in the Energy East pipeline review. (Andrew Vaughan/Canadian Press)

And 135 of those requests came from groups that have also applied for participant funding.

Katherine Murphy, a spokesperson for the NEB, said in an email statement that "\$40K is the maximum award amount (for groups) that would ensure funding is provided to all eligible interveners."

Murphy said the envelope for participant funding had already been doubled from \$2.5 million to \$5 million.

The NEB website still contains links to documents describing the two-phase process for participant funding. Each phase is described as having maximum funding allocations of \$40,000 for an \$80,000 total.

The dates and location for the hearings have not yet been set.

Conservation Council raises concerns



Stephanie Merrill, the acting executive director of the Conservation Council of New Brunswick, said she also has concerns with the cut to funds for interveners. ((CBC))

Stephanie Merrill, the acting executive director of the Conservation Council of New Brunswick, said First Nations aren't the only groups upset with the funding change.

"It feels like the National Energy Board are changing the rules half way through the game," said Merrill.

Merrill says it will now be "very difficult" to hire experts and give them time to properly scrutinize the documents and research presented by TransCanada and pipeline advocates.

"Scientists of this calibre they work in university settings and they have a whole lifetime of experience under their belt," said Merrill.

"We certainly want to make sure that we're able to compensate them for their time."

The City of Saint John, for instance, has professional staff working on its intervenor brief and has, in addition allotted \$30,000 to hire Gaetan Caron, the former chair of the National Energy Board, as a consultant.

Although there will be space in the city brief to address public safety and environmental issues, a motion approved by city council last November will ensure it favours construction of the pipeline.

It declares the project is of "utmost importance" to the Saint John area.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/neb-energy-east-intervener-funding-1.3236504>

B.C. hopes to accelerate First Nations treaty negotiations, UBCM told

By Kelly Sinoski, Vancouver Sun September 21, 2015



B.C. is attempting to renew and complete treaty negotiations with local First Nations, but the minister for aboriginal relations acknowledges it won't be easy. Minister John Rustad, left, said the province has been working with the First Nations Summit and federal government to review and jumpstart treaty negotiations, which in some cases have been stalled for more than a decade.

B.C. is attempting to renew and complete treaty negotiations with local First Nations, but the minister for aboriginal relations acknowledges it won't be easy.

Minister John Rustad said the province has been working with the First Nations Summit and federal government to review and jumpstart treaty negotiations, which in some cases have been stalled for more than a decade.

The Katzie First Nation, for instance, has been in stage four of treaty negotiations for 10 years.

"Maybe it's out of our reach but we have to do something," Rustad said, following a session on First Nations at the Union of B.C. Municipalities. "We can't wait for another generation. Well, obviously we can but we don't want to. What would that achieve?"

A report from the First Nations Summit and federal government is expected at the end of this year.

Rustad said he hopes the information will help accelerate the treaty process, noting there are about 40 land claims on the table with half of those, such as the Katzie, fairly advanced.

Katzie Chief Susan Miller said it's ridiculous the treaty process has taken so long. "We have a right to grow, a right to become economically independent," she told UBCM delegates.

Rustad noted some of the issues holding up the process include everything from fishing and hunting rights to how to deal with claims on private lands.

The Katzie reserve, for instance, is finding itself increasingly hemmed in by municipal and private developments.

The band, which has reserves in Langley, Barnston Island and Pitt Meadows, is claiming unceded territories in those areas as well as Maple Ridge, Coquitlam and Port Coquitlam.

Rustad said he's hopeful an agreement can be reached with the Katzie. "When you look at the results of the Tsawwassen and the Nisga'a, the way they're engaged and building their futures, we want to see that across the province," he said.

But Harry Nyce, a director with the Kitimat-Stikine Regional District who negotiated for the Nisga'a, said First Nations shouldn't expect too much.

He noted the Nisga'a was disappointed with how much land and money it received on the treaty process but that was all that available because the process wasn't started soon enough.

"It's taking too long," Nyce said, saying the federal government is too arrogant or "afraid to do the right thing."

"When First Nations come to the notion of claims and getting traditional lands back in this day and age, in the 21st century that's not going to happen," said Nyce, a past president of the UBCM. "For the government to provide some of these traditional lands back all they can do is money."

Direct Link:

<http://www.vancouversun.com/life/hopes+accelerate+first+nations+treaty+negotiations+ubcm+told/11378416/story.html>

Essay: A brief look at the Tsilhqot'in Nation Aboriginal title case

By [staff1](#) on September 24, 2015



This article is part of the Herald's 2015 Forestry Supplement, put out each year to coincide with National Forest Week.

ESSAY WINNER OF THE 2015 MIKE MORRISON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

By Jennifer Dustin

“It only took 150 years, but we look forward to a much brighter future. This without question will establish a solid platform for genuine reconciliation to take place in British Columbia.”

– Grand Chief Stuart Phillip (as quoted by CBC, 2014)

On June 26th, 2014, for the first time in Canadian history, the Supreme Court of Canada declared Aboriginal title to a Canadian First Nation. The Tsilhqot’in Nation Aboriginal Title Case Decision (also referred to as the Williams Case Decision) resulted in Aboriginal title to nearly 1,900 square kilometers in south central British Columbia. Aboriginal title designates primary control of land — including the right to enjoy and profit from the land. Stemming from a series of cumulative legal proceedings spanning over two decades, the Williams Case Decision resulted in a landmark decision that is sure to change the future of land claims and economic development for Canadian First Nations.

Motivated to protect traditional territory from over-logging and what the Tsilhqot’in believed was improper use of the land by provincial and federal governments, the Tsilhqot’in Nation began a formal legal battle with the British Columbia and Canadian governments to assert indigenous rights over an area roughly 4,300 square kilometers near the city of Williams Lake.

In November 2007, Judge David Vicker of the British Columbia Supreme Court ruled that the Tsilhqot’in had demonstrated Aboriginal title over a portion of the land in dispute, but stopped short of making a formal judgment of title: “While the BC Supreme Court decision did not find Aboriginal title because of an issue related to the pleadings of the case, it did express its opinion that the Tsilhqot’in Nation could prove Aboriginal title to parts of its claimed traditional territory.”

Based on this decision, the Tsilhqot’in Nation filed an appeal, ultimately resulting in the Canada’s first legal declaration of Aboriginal title.

There are two primary gains in achieving aboriginal title: “the right to control the land” and “protection from government jurisdiction.”

Specifically, Aboriginal title trumps the Forest Act, which allows government and private companies access to “Crown” resources.

The Tsilhqot’in, now with Aboriginal title, are granted control of formerly recognized Crown land/recourses (Tsilhqot’in National Government, n.d.); they have regained the right to decide what developments occur on the land (economic, social, culture, etc.).

The Canadian government can intervene, however, in exceptional circumstances; they must either have express consent from the First Nation, or have strong justification — proven in court — before the intervention.

In a wider context, the granting of Aboriginal title is significant to First Nations across Canada, many of whom are engaged in ongoing land disputes. Aboriginal title extends indigenous rights to allow the First Nation primary control of the land. The Williams Case Decision opens the door for other First Nations to be granted title of traditional lands beyond the previous “postage stamp” system that permitted plaintiffs extended rights to isolated areas that were proven to be used extensively for traditional purposes. In addition, the Williams Case Decision adds to ongoing negotiation/translation between Western colonial and First Nations ways of knowing/ruling. One academic article by Weir outlines how, in 2007, Judge Vickers stopped short of declaring full Aboriginal title in part because he was unable to meet his own aspirations: “In order to truly hear the oral history and oral tradition evidence . . . courts must undergo their own process of decolonization.” The Williams Case required the Tsilhqot’in Nation to prove the historical use of the land, however, “proof” is a culturally constructed concept that required “translation” between the oral histories of the Tsilhqot’in and the contemporary Canadian judicial system.

The Williams Case Decision is only one example of the dynamic relationship between Canadian and First Nations’ cultures, but one that has changed the way First Nations can protect and maintain their relationship with traditional territory.

The decision has implications to non-indigenous people as well; where once sources of economic development were accessible, today they may no longer be, or require extensive negotiation or sanctions.

John Loxley, a long respected academic and advocate in community development and economics, recognizes the tension between competing economic and cultural interests, and argues that Canadian and First Nations governments need to work together toward in order to achieve relevant and sustainable development.

“Together with this highly developed sense of stewardship over land and natural resources, Aboriginal communities maintain a value system which appear to be singularly relevant to the search for a more sustainable form of economic existence.”

Jennifer Dustin is currently completing her second year of the PhD program at McMaster’s School of Social Work in Hamilton, Ont. Jennifer received her BA in English and a Bachelor of Social Work from Thompson Rivers University before moving to Hamilton to complete her MSW at McMaster University.

Jennifer’s social service experience includes work with children, youth and families in non-profit agencies, community development work, and post-secondary instruction – all of which, Jennifer recognizes are linked to her deeply supportive and encouraging upbringing in her hometown of Merritt, B.C. Largely informed by her practice experience, Jennifer’s doctoral studies explore the relationship between media representations of social work, and public understandings of social work practice.

Direct Link: <http://www.merrittherald.com/essay-a-brief-look-at-the-tsilhqotin-nation-aboriginal-title-case/>

First Nations communities call for hold on pipeline hearings

Woodstock, Madawaska and Tobique upset over cuts to funding for intervenors at NEB hearings

[CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 24, 2015 6:30 PM AT Last Updated: Sep 24, 2015 6:47 PM AT



Renée Pelletier says several First Nations communities want to meet with the Crown regarding cuts to funding for intervenors in the NEB hearings on the Energy east pipeline. (Courtesy: Olthuis Kleer Townshend LLP)

Three First Nations communities in New Brunswick are calling for National Energy Board hearings on the Energy East pipeline to be put on hold until they can meet with the Crown.

Woodstock, Madawaska and Tobique First Nations are upset over dramatic cuts to funding for intervenors at the hearings.

The NEB unilaterally cut funding for intervenors from \$80,000 to \$40,000 dollars to accommodate as many groups as possible.

The three communities say that's not enough for them to carry out the research needed.

Their lawyer, Renée Pelletier, says they want a meeting with the Crown "to talk about the consultation process for the review of the pipeline as well as adequate funding. And they've asked that until that happens that the NEB process be put to a halt."

Pelletier says the federal government has to play a role in this process, since First Nations in New Brunswick have constitutional rights over land use.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/first-nations-energy-east-pipeline-neb-pelletier-1.3242158>

Special Topic: Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women

Bannock and Klik served at vigil for woman killed over can of meat

Geraldine Beardy died in 2009 after being assaulted at corner store on Sherbrook Street

By Jillian Taylor, [CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 18, 2015 4:00 AM CT Last Updated: Sep 18, 2015 5:06 PM CT



Family, friends and hospital staff gathered Friday afternoon to remember 29-year-old Geraldine Beardy, who died six years ago over a can of lunch meat.

Mourners passed out Klik and bannock sandwiches, drummed and prayed as they paid tribute to Beardy.

Great-grandmother Eliza Beardy fought back tears to share some strong words with the crowd at the event. She asked the crowd to respect each other and remember we are all human.



Great-grandmother Eliza Beardy (right) and other mourners remember 29-year-old Geraldine Beardy at a vigil in Winnipeg on Friday. (Jeff Stapleton/CBC)

Beardy was taken off life support on Sept. 18, 2009, after being assaulted days earlier in Okay Groceries on Sherbrook Street in Winnipeg. She was caught trying to steal a can of meat worth \$1.49.

"That's one girl I cared about," said Beardy. "Sometimes I feel anger."

At the time, police alleged the convenience store owner confronted Geraldine Beardy and assaulted her when he caught her trying to take the can of Holiday luncheon meat.

Police have never said how Beardy was assaulted or whether a weapon was used.



Geraldine Beardy, 29, died Sept. 18, 2009, after lapsing into a coma. (CBC)

Beardy's family members said they believe she was hit with a baseball bat and lapsed into a coma after being struck.

Owner Kwang Soo Kim confirmed the attempted theft, but said he asked Beardy to leave. He said he didn't know what happened to her after that.

Kim was charged with manslaughter, but the charges were dropped in 2011 after the main witness left the country.

"I don't even want to think about the owner of that store, it's so hard," said Eliza Beardy.

The memorial was held at Jacob Penner Park on Notre Dame Avenue across from the Health Sciences Centre, the last place Eliza Beardy saw her granddaughter before the assault.

"There is a bench right there; that is where I saw her," said Beardy. "I sit there and say, 'Geraldine, where are you? Why?' I ask questions."



The owner of Okay Groceries was originally charged with manslaughter in connection with Beardy's death. The charges were dropped in 2011. (CBC News)

The vigil was organized by Ka Ni Kanichihk, where Beardy is an elder.

"When you are living and working in the community, we have a responsibility to stand behind our grandmothers to raise these very difficult issues that we have," said Leslie Spillett, executive director of Ka Ni Kanichihk.

Spillett said the memorial will raise issues of poverty, systemic racism and hunger — things Geraldine Beardy had experienced.

"This happens all the time; this is not an isolated incident. This happens frequently, that people don't have enough to eat in this community," said Spillett.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/bannock-and-klik-served-at-vigil-for-woman-killed-over-can-of-meat-1.3232090>

Day pushes for inquiry

By [Brian Kelly](#), Sault Star

Sunday, September 20, 2015 12:49:38 EDT PM



Isadore Day, Ontario regional chief of Chiefs of Ontario, spoke at an annual general meeting of Ontario Native Women's Association.

Chiefs of Ontario is doing what the federal government won't - laying the groundwork for an inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women.

An RCMP report, released in 2014, found more than 1,100 cases of missing or murdered First Nation women between 1980 and 2012.

Isadore Day, Ontario regional chief of Chiefs of Ontario, calls the inquiry the most pressing issue affecting First Nations people.

"If you take a woman out of the equation, we are lost. We will perish as a species," he said following a speech at the annual general meeting of Ontario Native Women's Association.

Chiefs of Ontario launched its Who is She campaign on Sept. 9 to raise a minimum of \$500,000 for an inquiry.

Day, chief of Serpent River First Nation near Elliot Lake, said his group's campaign has the backing of leaders from eight regions, including Ontario, Quebec, Alberta and British Columbia, who attended a recent Assembly of First Nations meeting.

"It's basically just one individual, who is (Conservative Leader) Stephen Harper, who doesn't want an inquiry," said Day during a break Saturday at the meeting at Delta Waterfront Hotel and Conference Centre. "He's only one person."

Day is counting on public pressure generated by Who is She to force the Tories, should the party return to power after an election Oct. 19, to change course and back an inquiry.

"The government eventually has to begin doing what the people want," said Day. "We know that the Conservative government has not been in the habit of doing that. He's been pretty much his own one-man show."

The regional chief wants fact-finding done by the enquiry to identify "why there's such a disproportionate number" of aboriginal women who are targeted with violence.

“We definitely want to get all the information that will help us to formulate some of the recommended strategies and policies that we feel are necessary to begin eradicating, and changing, that drastic trend,” Day told The Sault Star.

He's critical of the federal Indian Act what he says is its role in the suffering of aboriginal women.

“The damn Indian Act has had an impact on our communities and is in large part one of the reasons for missing and murdered indigenous women in this country,” said Day. “Until we begin to change that underfabric of imposed institution against our people, we're always going to see this type of problem.”

He anticipates Chiefs of Ontario's efforts to push for an enquiry will help stir the interest of aboriginal people in the probe.

“If we're able to begin the initial stages, put the underpinnings in of an inquiry process and get our people engaged to the point that they understand and can anticipate what the enquiry will be, we're going to own that process,” said Day.

Raising the \$500,000 and getting the “right partners at the table” from the First Nation community will force a Conservative government to support the study, he added.

“Eventually the federal government will have no choice but to support an enquiry,” said Day.

He doesn't plan to cast a ballot in the federal election, saying it's essential he “maintain neutrality and non-partisanship” as a leader of a group dedicated to the self-determination of 133 First Nations in the province.

He also won't encourage aboriginal people to vote, or abstain, on election day.

“Even if you don't vote, you can still get out there and you can raise the level of issues in First Nations or in your community, wherever that might be,” said Day. “The vote is only one aspect here. If somebody believes that they don't want to vote, there's still a whole lot of work to do.”

Direct Link: <http://www.saultstar.com/2015/09/19/day-pushes-for-enquiry>

Vigil honours missing, murdered aboriginal women

By [Andrew Philips](#), Special to Postmedia Network

Friday, September 18, 2015 5:34:47 EDT PM



Thirteen candles were lit for 13 murdered and missing Aboriginal women during Orillia's Sisters in Spirit Vigil in 2014 to represent the 13 Grandmother Moon teachings. PACKET & TIMES FILE PHOTO

A fourth annual event next month highlights a continuing national problem, according to an organizer.

Candace Hawke, executive director of Biminaawzogin Regional Aboriginal Women's Circle, said the Sisters In Spirit vigil recognizes the ongoing plight of missing and murdered aboriginal women and girls.

"We continue to raise awareness and support," Hawke said, noting the vigil is slated for Oct. 4 from noon to 2 p.m. at the Orillia Native Women's Group office at 110 Matchedash St. N.

Citing statistics outlined in a 2014 RCMP report, Hawke said there are 1,181 known cases of missing or murdered aboriginal women and girls in Canada.

"Aboriginal women are over-represented," she said. "There's been a constant plea to the federal government to launch a federal inquiry."

But in the absence of an official government inquiry, Hawke said, she's thrilled the Chiefs of Ontario decided to launch their Who Is She campaign last week.

"I'm happy the Chiefs of Ontario are taking role and are tired of waiting on the federal government," she said.

The fundraising effort is aimed at creating a First Nations-led, community-driven process to eradicate violence against indigenous women and girls, according to the campaign website.

Direct Link: <http://www.orilliapacket.com/2015/09/18/vigil-honours-missing-murdered-aboriginal-women>

Missing and murdered aboriginal women a 'national shame in Canada'



Dawn Lavell-Harvard, president of the Native Women's Association of Canada, was the keynote speaker at the Interim Place annual general meeting last week (Sept. 17) at the Mississauga Valley Community Centre. Her talk focused on missing and murdered aboriginal women in Canada.

Mississauga News

By [Jason Spencer](#), Sep 23, 2015

Dawn Lavell-Harvard was just 18 and standing on a street corner in Toronto, waiting for a ride from her brother.

He'd borrowed her car while she attended a meeting at an indigenous friendship centre.

She was in awe of her surroundings – being a recent arrival to the big city.

She put her briefcase down and noticed people staring at her differently.

Even a police officer slowed down to look askance.

A woman shouted at her from across the street and told her to go elsewhere. A man said that if she "works that corner," she works for him.

She soon clued in that this corner (Shuter and Parliament) was a bad place to wait.

Relieved when her ride finally arrived, brother and sister were pulled over moments later.

The officer suspected that her brother was a john. Luckily, their identification proved otherwise.

"That was so naive – I just didn't realize at all the position I was putting myself in, but it shouldn't have to be that way," the president of the Native Women's Association of Canada told an audience at the Mississauga Valley Community Centre last Thursday (Sept. 17).

That stereotype of aboriginal women is something Lavell-Havard continues to rail against as she advocates for their safety.

A member of the Wikwemikong First Nation (near Manitoulin Island), Lavell-Havard was the keynote speaker at Interim Place's annual general meeting. She spoke at the Peel women's shelter event to call for a national inquiry from all levels of government into Canada's missing and murdered aboriginal women.

"This is not just a women's issue; this is not even an aboriginal issue; this is a national tragedy and this is a national shame in Canada," she said, after citing the RCMP's numbers of nearly 1,200 missing and murdered aboriginal women and girls.

"As the rates of homicides for women in Canada in general have gone down, the rates of homicides against indigenous women continues to go up."

Lavell-Havard said the federal government funds 44 shelters on reserves across the country, a pitiful few since there are 633 First Nations – not including the territories. That gap leaves an untold number of aboriginal women and children out in the cold when facing violence, she added.

There is also a problem when interpreting the data between the number of female, aboriginal homicide victims compared to female, non-aboriginal homicide victims, she said.

Murdered aboriginal women are said to be twice as likely to have income from crime (18 per cent compared to nine per cent) and twice as likely to be involved in the sex trade (12 per cent to six per cent).

"If 18 per cent had income from criminal activity that means 82 per cent didn't ... it was just somebody's sister, somebody's mother; she was a secretary or a teacher. So, why are we focusing (on those figures) other than to blame that victim?"

"They were just woman trying to live their lives in a country that disrespects women, in a country that disrespects aboriginal people and so you put that together and our women are much more vulnerable."

Though Lavell-Havard had a scary experience years ago in mid-town, she's learned that some aboriginal girls from northern communities feel safer in a multicultural place like Toronto.

Another dimension to the false portrait of an indigenous woman is that she drinks too much alcohol and if she is missing it is "that she is out partying."

"Those first few days that are really important, they go by because nobody is really looking for them."

Searches for a missing aboriginal girl can also be initially clouded by the perception of a runaway, she said, and adds that police sometimes give the excuse that it's out of their jurisdiction.

She said some feel that it's better to not identify as First Nations when reporting a missing loved one because you might get a better response.

Lavell-Havard also touched on how the issue ties into the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, released earlier this year. It's a searing document articulating the damage done to the native communities in Canada through the residential school programs that were common right into the post-war era.

"There's a very, very clear link between residential school trauma, intergenerational trauma and the level of violence and the missing and murdered indigenous women now," she said.

She noted that 70 per cent of "kids being sold on the streets are kids in child welfare."

Direct Link: <http://www.mississauga.com/news-story/5926666-missing-and-murdered-aboriginal-women-a-national-shame-in-canada/>

Feds urged to move ahead on inquiry into deaths of indigenous women

[Eva Ferguson, Calgary Herald](#)

Published on: September 22, 2015 | Last Updated: September 22, 2015 5:34 PM MDT



Women take part in a rally on Parliament Hill in Ottawa on Friday, October 4, 2013 by the Native Women's Association of Canada honouring the lives of missing and murdered aboriginal women and girls. Fred Chartrand / THE CANADIAN PRESS

The federal government could face yet more pressure from municipalities to launch an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women.

Cities at the annual meeting of the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association will be urged to support a resolution asking Ottawa to move forward with a national inquiry, as part of an effort to improve the justice system and its work with First Nation communities.

Jeff Coffman, a councillor with the City of Lethbridge, will bring forward the resolution this week, arguing that communities in and around southern Alberta are particularly impacted by the issue.

“We just had another death in our community,” said Coffman, referring to Victoria Joanne Crow Shoe, 43, who was found dead along the shores of the Oldman River Reservoir near Lethbridge last week.

“And we need the federal government to investigate. A lot of these women and their families are our citizens and residents. It’s an issue of growing concern in our community.”

Officials with the AUMA are meeting in Calgary this week to discuss a series of resolutions affecting municipalities and asking other levels of government to work harder at issues that impact urban centres.

But the recently released Truth and Reconciliation Commission report, in which one of 94 recommendations is to have the federal government launch an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women, has become an increasingly sore point among cities.

This past summer, Calgary Coun. Brian Pincott said the city [also needs to join](#) the growing list of municipalities and provinces calling on Ottawa to launch an inquiry — a motion later [approved](#) by city council.

“We have a real problem in our country and we need to begin to address it,” Pincott said in July.

A 2014 RCMP report found 1,181 cases of missing and murdered aboriginal women between 1980 and 2012, exceeding previous estimates. The Harper government continues to resist pressure to hold an inquiry.

Direct Link: <http://calgaryherald.com/news/local-news/feds-urged-to-move-ahead-on-inquiry-into-deaths-of-indigenous-women>

Montreal vigil honours missing and murdered Aboriginal women

By [Aalia Adam](#) Global News, October 4, 2014 2:28 pm



MONTREAL – The lives of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls were honoured Saturday evening at Place Émilie-Gamelin.

The [9th Annual Sisters in Spirit Memorial march and vigil](#) in Montreal is one of the hundreds held this weekend across Canada aimed at helping communities come together to grieve the loss of these women.

The Quebec Native Women's Association organized the event to raise awareness and put pressure on the Harper government for a National public inquiry in consultation with Indigenous communities, along with a nation-specific action plan.



A recent RCMP report stated that, “Indigenous women make up 4.3 per cent of the Canadian population, but account for 16 per cent of female homicides and 11.3 per cent of missing women.”

According to Amnesty International, Indigenous women in Canada are five times more likely than other women to die due to violence.

Direct Link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/1598524/montreal-vigil-honours-missing-and-murdered-aboriginal-women/>

Special Topic: Residential Schools & '60s Scoop

Aboriginal groups want to meet the Pope over residential schools

[Mark Kennedy, Ottawa Citizen](#)

Published on: September 23, 2015 | Last Updated: September 23, 2015 5:32 PM EDT



Residential school survivor Lorna Standingready is comforted by a fellow survivor during the closing ceremony of the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission, at Rideau Hall in Ottawa on Wednesday, June 3, 2015. Sean Kilpatrick / THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada's top aboriginal chief and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission have asked to meet Pope Francis during his trip to the United States this week to discuss their call for an apology from the Catholic Church over its role in the residential school system.

But they have not received a response to their request, contained in an Aug. 24 letter sent directly to the Pope, as well as a similar letter sent the same day to the Vatican's representative at the United Nations.

The letters, obtained by the Citizen, came two months after the commission (TRC) released a report about residential schools after a five-year review in which thousands of former students told their stories of abuse and neglect.

Among its 94 recommendations, the commission urged the Pope to travel to Canada within the next year and issue an apology for the church's role in the "spiritual, emotional, physical and sexual abuse" of aboriginal students in Catholic-run schools.

Since the TRC released its report, there has been no public indication from the Vatican that the Pope would travel to Canada to issue an apology.

So the signatories to the letter concluded they would request a meeting with him on American soil.

"We write to you on matters of great importance to the Indigenous peoples whose traditional territories span both Canada and the United States of America," says the two-page letter to the Pope.

"The Indigenous peoples we serve have suffered much spiritual, physical and emotional harm through the Indian Residential Schools, in both Canada and the USA – in which the Catholic Church played a role."

The letter was signed by Assembly of First Nations national chief Perry Bellegarde; the three TRC commissioners (Murray Sinclair, Wilton Littlechild and Marie Wilson); and Brian Cladoosby, president of the National Congress of American Indians.

In their letter, they thank the Pope for his devotion to the poor and add they were "deeply touched" by his compassion during his trip to Bolivia in July.

"You spoke about the serious harms inflicted upon Indigenous peoples, and ... you courageously and forthrightly acknowledged the past role of the Church in advancing colonialism. For us, your acknowledgement of these painful truths is fundamental for reconciliation."

"We would greatly appreciate an opportunity to share our vision of prayer and action to bring solace, peace and hope to all of the Indigenous peoples of North America."

The Pope is making his first trip to the U.S. this week, with stops in Washington, D.C., New York City and, on the weekend, Philadelphia.

Bellegarde said in an interview Wednesday he and others are ready to quickly travel to the U.S.

He said a papal apology would "mean a lot" to former students and their families. "It's all part of the truth and reconciliation process. You tell the truth. You learn from it."

He said it's unfortunate a meeting with the Pope has not been "secured" but the group isn't giving up.

“We’re not going to put that on the shelf. We’re going to keep pursuing the audience with him.”

A copy of the letter to the Pope was sent to Luigi Bonazzi, the Apostolic Nuncio who represents the Pope in Canada. On Wednesday, the embassy, known as the Apostolic Nunciature, declined comment.

Since the 1880s, more than 150,000 aboriginal children were sent to federally funded and supervised residential schools run by the churches.

While the Anglican, United and Presbyterian have each issued apologies from their leaders, the Catholics released apologies or statements of regret from individual dioceses and religious orders.

The TRC said it has been disappointing to survivors and others that the Pope has not made “a clear and emphatic public apology.”

In 2009, Pope Benedict met privately in Rome with some aboriginal leaders, and the Vatican later said he “expressed his sorrow at the anguish caused by the deplorable conduct of some members of the Church.”

But the TRC said those words, said in private, isn’t enough.

Direct Link: <http://ottawacitizen.com/news/politics/aboriginal-groups-want-to-meet-the-pope-over-residential-schools>

Special Topic: International Indigenous Populations

Landmark settlement awards \$940M to Native American tribes

Agreement still has to be approved by federal judge

Published 7:01 PM MDT Sep 17, 2015

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. —The United States government has awarded nearly a billion dollars to Native American tribes in a historic settlement, and some of that money is going to tribes in New Mexico.

This week the U.S. Department of Justice announced a \$940 million settlement with 645 Native American tribes.

The Ramah Navajo chapter in New Mexico filed a lawsuit in 1990 claiming the U.S. government underpaid its portion of federal contracts for things like health care, education, law enforcement, housing, and other support programs.

Tribal leaders said they had to try to make up the difference to provide those services. When they couldn't, people on tribal land suffered.

"The federal government's conduct was not just cruel and wrong, it was illegal," said Governor Val Panteah Sr. of the Zuni Pueblo.

The massive payout will compensate the tribes and tribal contractors who were underpaid from 1994 to 2013.

Tribal leaders said the victory will help them get the services they need to curb issues like unemployment, alcoholism, diabetes, and other issues plaguing tribes across the state and the country. Some argue more needs to be done.

"I'm very satisfied with this settlement, but in other areas of those treaty obligations we need to work like we did here," said President John Yellowbird Steele of the Oglala Sioux tribe.

Tribal and government leaders agree this could lay the groundwork for even more healing in the future.

The agreement still has to be approved by a federal judge. Barring any setbacks, tribes could start getting payments in about six to ten months.

Direct Link: <http://www.koat.com/news/landmark-settlement-awards-940m-to-native-american-tribes/35340756>

Native American child sent home over traditional mohawk

David DeMille, The (St. George, Utah) Spectrum 8:56 p.m. EDT September 17, 2015



ST. GEORGE, Utah — A 7-year-old Native American student was removed from his classroom this week after school officials decided his Mohawk haircut [was too distracting](#).

The second-grader, whose parents are Seneca and Paiute, chose a hairstyle that is popular with native peoples in many places, his father said Thursday, but his wife still received a call from the school saying it went against the Arrowhead Elementary School's dress code.

He was allowed to return to class only after a member of the Seneca National Tribe, located in New York, penned a letter to Washington County School District administrators confirming that the hairstyle is a common tradition among tribal members.

"It is common for Seneca boys to wear a Mohawk because after years of discrimination and oppression, they are proud to share who they are," wrote William Canella, a Seneca Nation Tribal Councilor. "It's disappointing that your school does not view diversity in a positive manner, and it is our hope that (the boy) does not suffer any discrimination by the school administration or faculty as a result of his hair cut."

Gary Sanden, the boy's father, said Thursday that he was sympathetic with the school's reasoning behind having a dress code, but was unsure why he had to jump through so many hoops to have his son's style approved.

He said his wife was called first and initially told she needed to come in to pick the boy up and have the hairstyle changed. The parents offered to bring in a tribal card proving the boy is Native American, but the district demanded a tribal letter.

"I have two (sons) who go to Arrowhead," Sanden said. "My other boy, he's 10, didn't want a Mohawk and went with the non-native haircut, kind of high and tight. So the principal says well, you have another son here who doesn't have a Mohawk, why can't you cut (the younger boy's) hair that way too."

Sanden said the family had decided to decline showing a photograph of their son's haircut, citing concerns about backlash he might receive at the school due to media attention. A family acquaintance, and not Sanden or other family members, first contacted *The Spectrum & Daily News* about the incident.

Rex Wilkey, assistant superintendent over primary education, said he thought the issue was overblown. District policy allows for school administrators to judge what constitutes "distracting," and such judgment calls are part of what always makes enforcement of a dress code difficult. Once it was shown that there was a cultural value attached to the boy's haircut, he was allowed back into class, he said.

"We try to reflect the values and norms of the community," Wilkey said. "Some things are a little more clear cut, and some things are a little more controversial. You try to manage it the best you can. Kids come in dressed all kinds of ways and it can be an issue for the school."

According to the district dress code, "Extremes in body piercings, hair styles and hair colors may be considered a distraction or disruption."

The policy has been amended several times since it was first adopted in 1998, most recently in 2013 after a similar incident that raised the ire of upset parents.

In that instance, Rylee MacKay, a 15-year-old Hurricane Middle School student at the time, was suspended for dying her hair a shade of red administrators argued did not fall under the spectrum of natural hair colors.

The school board chose to strip out some of the more specific language in the policy, deciding instead to let individual school administrators decide which styles were a problem.

John Mejia, legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Utah, said school districts are given a lot of discretion in setting dress and appearance standards, "but it is well established law that you do not shed all of your constitutional rights at the schoolhouse door."

When it comes to religious or cultural issues where a particular style is important to an individual student and his or her family, the school needs to make a reasonable accommodation, Mejia said.

Direct Link: <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2015/09/17/native-american-child-sent-home-over-traditional-mohawk/72367380/>

Dartmouth Native American Program Director Under Fire

By Rob Wolfe

Valley News Staff Writer

Friday, September 18, 2015

(Published in print: Friday, September 18, 2015)

Hanover — Native American advocates are raising questions about the way Dartmouth College's new director of the Native American Program has represented both her ancestry and tribal affiliation.

The advocates say that Susan Taffe Reed, who began work on Sept. 1, is neither biologically native nor a member of a federally recognized tribe, and accuse her of "cultural appropriation."

College officials have stood behind Taffe Reed, who denies the claims and says she has been forthright about her personal and professional experiences.

Dartmouth announced in a Sept. 11 news release that Taffe Reed, "an ethnomusicologist and the president of the Eastern Delaware Nations," recently had taken over the college's services for Native American students. The controversy over her hiring was first reported by insidehighered.com on Thursday.

The federal government recognizes three Delaware tribes as descendants of Native Americans expelled hundreds of years ago from their ancestral homelands. The Eastern Delaware Nations, despite its nonprofit status, has not received state or federal recognition, according to the Eastern Delaware Nations' website.

"She's using the Delaware name, and that's not OK with us," Nicky Michael, a member of the federally recognized Delaware Tribal Council, said by phone Thursday. "We've not given the permission or the right to do it."

Native American advocates have [scrutinized](#) Taffe Reed's ancestry, which they say does not include Native American heritage, as well as the organization she runs.

"I personally have no problem with a non-Indian getting the job on her own merits," Keely Squirrel Denning, a Shawnee tribe member who researched Taffe Reed's origins, said in a telephone interview. Misrepresenting one's background, however, is a "slap in the face," Denning said.

Denning, who said she based her research mainly on death certificates, rebutted Taffe Reed's claimed ancestral ties to the Eastern Delaware Nations. Denning found Taffe Reed's grandfather was a member of the Eastern Delaware Nations, but his parents appeared to be Irish immigrants.

Through a college spokeswoman, Taffe Reed said that Denning's genealogical study had not been accurate, though she did not specify the inaccuracies.

"Susan Taffe Reed is of Native and European heritage," spokeswoman Diana Lawrence said in a statement. "She has never represented herself as a member of a federal- or state-recognized tribe. She was transparent about her professional and personal experience throughout the search process. We are satisfied with the information she provided and are confident in her qualifications for this position."

The statement also noted that it is illegal to hire a candidate or deny employment based on ethnicity. Advocates and college officials alike agreed that Native American ancestry should not be a requirement for the college job.

Dartmouth's news release, which praises Taffe Reed's "leadership roles in her Delaware tribal community," does not mention the Eastern Delaware Nations' recognition status.

The disagreement over tribal identity is rooted in a history of Native American persecution by European settlers. Members of the Eastern Delaware Nations, according to the group's website, mostly "are descendants of Native Americans who lived in the Endless Mountains Region of Northeastern Pennsylvania and resisted being removed."

"Some EDN members are not of Native American descent," the website reads, "but join as social members in support of a family member or to assist EDN in educational outreach and other activities."

Taffe Reed, who holds a doctorate in musicology and Native American studies, has made the history of the Pennsylvania region a focus of her research.

"My most recent academic scholarship is about powwow music and dance, and the experience of Native peoples in the mountains of Pennsylvania," she said in a statement. "It is a diverse group of people with a rich oral history and body of experience to share. I look forward to sharing my work and my experience with the Dartmouth community. It is simply inaccurate to say that there are no people of Native American descent in Pennsylvania."

But not everyone sees it that way. In the opinion of Michael, who lives in Oklahoma with many other card-holding tribe members, the Delawares left the East Coast long ago — and none remain.

"For people to say they hid out, that's much more questionable," Michael said, "and to say that they hid out for 400 years? That's hard to believe. If you ask our elders, they'll say, 'We didn't leave anybody behind.'"

N. Bruce Duthu, a Native American studies professor who chaired the Dartmouth search committee that selected Taffe Reed, defended the hire in a statement provided Thursday to the Valley News.

“Susan openly acknowledged that she is a person of mixed ancestry and identity, including Native ancestry,” Duthu said. “In the case of Native peoples (and other people of color), state records, including birth and death certificates, are notoriously unreliable sources of information about personal background. Likewise, there are serious problems with reliance on notions of ‘federal recognition’ as a measure of ‘authenticity’ since the standards for such recognition have been widely and consistently criticized by Native and non-Native scholars and activists alike ever since they were promulgated in 1978.”

Michele Leonard, a member of Eastern Long Island’s Shinnecock Indian Nation, acknowledged that “who gets to decide who is Native American” was a complex matter. Leonard said her own tribe only received federal recognition as recently as 2010, after 40 years of litigation, despite having had state recognition for far longer.

But where the Eastern Delaware Nations was concerned, there was less ambiguity, she said.

Leonard said the case reminded her of Rachel Dolezal, the former president of the NAACP’s chapter in Spokane, Wash., who represented her race as black, despite being biologically white.

Comparing Taffe Reed to Dolezal, Leonard said by phone Thursday, “when an individual claims to be something they’re not, and then uses the parts of that culture to gain funding or advancement ... they seize it for themselves, and they deny it to those that are deserving.”

In her statement, Taffe Reed focused on Dartmouth’s students and the lessons they stood to learn.

“Our students reflect the broad diversity of Native communities, histories and experiences,” she said. “(M)y goal as director is to support their educational experience and personal development. I am concerned about ways in which questions of identity and authenticity affect them. Sadly, (this) is a teachable moment that enables our students to reflect on the complex history and issues of identity in Indian Country.”

Rob Wolfe can be reached at rwolfe@vnews.com or 603-727-3242.

Correction

Susan Taffe Reed is the new director of Dartmouth College’s Native American Program, a student affairs department. A headline in an earlier version of this story incorrectly referred to an academic program at the college.

Direct Link: <http://www.vnews.com/news/18649678-95/dartmouth-native-studies-director-under-fire>

SoCal Priest One of Several Native Americans to Meet With Pope

Soon, the descendant of the Juanenos will meet face-to-face with Pope Francis in Washington D.C.--an honor that has San Juan Capistrano bursting with pride.

By [Kim Baldonado](#)



Father Jim Nieblas is one of several Native Americans invited to meet with Pope Francis. Updated at 7:59 PM PDT on Friday, Sep 18, 2015

Mission San Juan Capistrano is the last remaining mission church where Father Junipero Serra said mass. The chapel was built by Juaneno Native Americans more than 200 years ago.

Soon, the descendant of the Juanenos will meet face-to-face with Pope Francis in Washington D.C.--an honor that has San Juan Capistrano bursting with pride.

Pope Makes Effort to Reach Out to Mission San Juan Capistrano



Mission San Juan Capistrano is the last remaining mission church where father Junipero Serra said mass. Kim Baldonado reports for the NBC4 News at 5 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 18, 2015. (Published Friday, Sept. 18, 2015)

"They know me as Jimmy, so it's little Jimmy that has gotten this honor and they're very proud of me," said Father Jim Nieblas.

Father Jim Nieblas is the vice director at St. John Bosco High School in Bellflower. The half Mexican, half Native American has deep roots in San Juan Capistrano.

He was baptized at the mission his ancestors built, attended the mission schools and was ordained there, becoming the first Juaneno Indian to become a priest.

He's now one of a handful of Native Americans from California whom Pope Francis has asked to meet with moments after he canonizes Father Serra, making him a saint.

It was an invitation Father Nieblas did not immediately accept. "I think most of us understand there are part of our families who don't agree with it," said Nieblas.

Serra's sainthood has generated controversy within the Native American community. Some believe his mission system persecuted the Indians.

With this in mind, Nieblas asked his tribe for their blessing. "I wanted them to feel I respected them," said Nieblas. The tribe's response was not unanimous, but it was overwhelmingly positive.

"They each one embraced me, prayed over me, and blessed me. Now there were some who naturally didn't do that, but that's all right," Nieblas said.

Nieblas says he'll be taking his tribe along with him in the form of these gifts, which include traditional musical instruments and a rosary made of shells gathered from the shore in San Juan Capistrano.

The Juanenos believe the sound of the wind and the sea, which can be heard in the shells, carries their prayers to their creator. Now, it is Nieblas who will carry the message to the pontiff.

Direct Link: <http://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/SoCal-Priest-One-of-Several-Native-Americans-to-Meet-with-Pope-328258561.html>

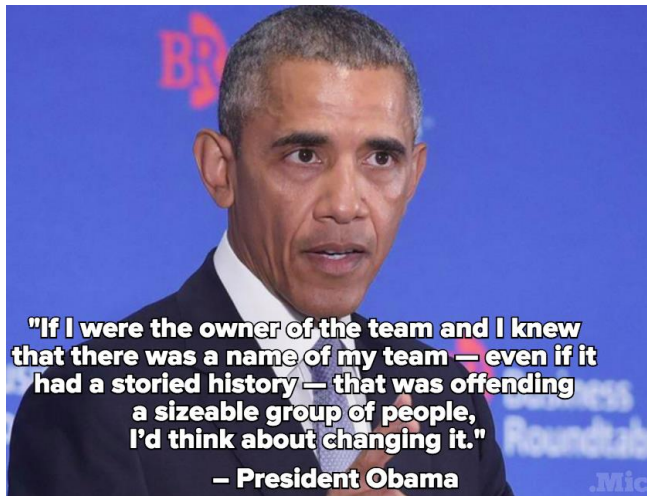
The NFL Owes Its Success to Native Americans, So Why Does It Still Mock Them?

By [Jamilah King](#) September 18, 2015
Like Mic on Facebook:

The NFL is back in full swing, and so is one of its most profitable franchises: the Washington Redskins.

It's a team that's defiantly sticking to its racist name, despite years of protests and lawsuits against it. Even [President Barack Obama](#) has weighed in, and said the team name should be changed because it's patently racist. Even though the issue has gained traction elsewhere, such as when the California Assembly recently [passed](#) a bill to ban the name "Redskins" in the state's public schools, not much has changed in the nation's capital.

"If I were the owner of the team and I knew that there was a name of my team — even if it had a storied history — that was offending a sizable group of people, I'd think about changing it," Obama said in 2013.

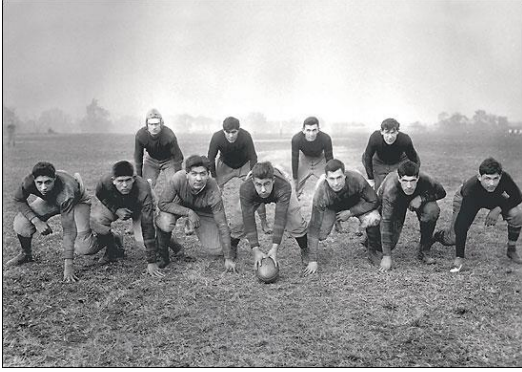


But team owner Daniel Snyder has refused to change anything. In fact, he's insisted the name is actually a celebration of Native American culture. The [Washington Post](#) published a letter Snyder wrote to season ticket-holders in 2013:

"'Washington Redskins' is more than a name we have called our football team for over eight decades. It is a symbol of everything we stand for: strength, courage, pride, and respect — the same values we know guide Native Americans and which are embedded throughout their rich history as the original Americans."

Not surprisingly, many Native Americans disagree.

The irony is that the NFL, a [multibillion-dollar business](#), owes much of its success to Native Americans. Specifically, to those who played the game at Pennsylvania's Carlisle Indian Industrial School at the turn of the 20th century.



As gruesome as football is today, it was much more violent in the early 1900s, nearly leading to the game's extinction. In 1905, for example, [19 people died](#) from injuries suffered on the football field. In order to make the game safer, new rules were instituted that changed the way it was played. Specifically, the forward pass, in which the quarterback throws the ball to a running back or receiver, was born. And the [first team](#) to master it was Carlisle, led by its coach, a man named Pop Warner.

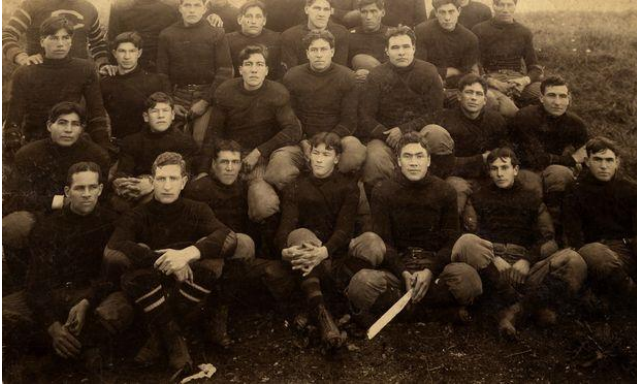


Carlisle Football Player Gus Lookaround in 1910.

In 1907, the Carlisle [team traveled](#) to to play the University of Chicago, then one of the country's most successful programs. With 27,000 people watching in the stands, many of whom chanted viciously racist slurs, Carlisle pulled off one of the biggest upsets in history and beat Chicago — thanks to a spiral pass.

Marshall Field, Chicago. Carlisle vs. Chicago, Nov. 23, 1907. Source: [Library of Congress](#)

That spiral pass has gone on to become one of the most important facets of modern football. Many of the game's greatest players — think Joe Montana, Tom Brady and Jerry Rice — made their mark either throwing or catching forward passes. The history of Native Americans' contributions, which has been documented beautifully by [RadioLab](#) and [Indian Country Today](#), has largely been forgotten; in the case of the football team playing for our nation's capital, that history is pretty much trampled. But if you're a football fan, you can thank these guys for the game that you love.



Direct Link: <http://mic.com/articles/125486/the-nfl-owes-its-success-to-native-americans-so-why-does-it-still-mock-them>

Indigenous activist who helped close polluting Guatemala palm oil factory shot dead

AFP

4 days ago



A worker loads a truck in the middle of a huge palm oil plantation in Petén, northern Guatemala.

GUATEMALA CITY – An indigenous leader opposed to the production of [Guatemala](#) palm oil was killed Friday outside a court that a day earlier ordered the closure of a factory against which he had led protests.

“We deplore the murder of the activist Rigoberto Lima Choc,” a spokesman for the National Union of Hope party (UNE) told AFP.

#JusticiaYa

The victim, 28, was shot outside a local court in Sayaxche, about 500 kilometers (300 miles) north of the capital, by two men on a motorcycle. Lima Choc was a teacher and municipal councilor for the UNE in Sayaxche.

His killing came a day after the court ordered the six-month closure of a business [accused of polluting a local river](#) with pesticides. The pesticides were used in the production of Guatemala palm oil and affected thousands of people in the region.

The United Nations had described the situation as an “[ecological disaster](#)” that caused the deaths of thousands of fish.

In early June, Lima Choc led a group of people denouncing the factory.

Direct Link: <http://www.ticotimes.net/2015/09/18/indigenous-activist-who-helped-close-polluting-guatemala-palm-oil-factory-shot-dead>

An Aboriginal Artist's Dizzying New York Moment

By [RANDY KENNEDY](#) SEPT. 18, 2015



Warlimpirrnga Tjapaltjarri with two of his untitled paintings at Salon 94. Credit Karsten Moran for The New York Times

For at least the last century, it has always been a momentous occasion: An artist from the hinterlands arrives in New York for the first time, hoping for what the writer Willie Morris called “the tender security of fulfillment.” But for the painter Warlimpirrnga Tjapaltjarri, things were a little different.

First, Mr. Tjapaltjarri, who is believed to be in his late 50s, has had an international following for several years, and currently has pieces in [a show traveling](#) the United States. Second, Mr. Tjapaltjarri's hinterlands are a lot more hinter than most. Until he

was in his 20s, he and his family, part of the Pintupi Aboriginal group, lived in a part of the Western Australia desert so remote that even after other Pintupi were forcibly relocated into settlements in the 1950s and 1960s, his family remained out of view, hunting lizards and wearing no clothes except for human-hair belts, as its ancestors had for tens of thousands of years. When they were [encountered by chance in 1984](#) and persuaded to move to a Pintupi community, they instantly became famous, known in newspaper accounts as the Pintupi Nine and described as the last “lost tribe.”

Photo



An untitled painting by Warlimpirrnga Tjapaltjarri in his show at Salon 94. He began painting on canvas in the 1980s after his family was “discovered” in the wild. Credit Karsten Moran for The New York Times

Since that time, Mr. Tjapaltjarri has taken up painting on canvas with two brothers, adapting ceremonial designs that Pintupi men used on rocks, spears and their bodies. While he has traveled several times within Australia, he took his first trip to another country last week, arriving in New York for the [first solo exhibition](#) of his work in the United States. The show runs through Oct. 24 at the [Salon 94 gallery](#) on the Bowery, near the New Museum.

Dressed in jeans, a checked shirt, Everlast tennis shoes and a black cowboy hat that would have been right at home at [Gilley’s nightclub in Houston](#) in the ’70s, Mr. Tjapaltjarri said through an interpreter that he was enjoying the attention his paintings were receiving but that the city itself was a little intimidating. He liked the subway, but the Top of the Rock at Rockefeller Center not so much. He laughed and patted his considerable paunch to show where the butterflies were.

It’s not a customary feeling for Mr. Tjapaltjarri (his full name is pronounced war-lehm-peer-ing-ah jah-pal-jah-ree), who was the eldest male in his family in the desert and, as a healer and keeper of ancestral stories at the heart of the Pintupi people, is still a commanding presence in [Kiwirrkurra](#), the community where he lives in the [Gibson Desert](#). The paintings that have made him a sought-after figure in the Desert Painting movement, which arose in the 1970s and sowed international interest in Aboriginal art, are in one sense transcriptions of the stories. They seem abstract, made from thousands of dots — a signature of much Desert Painting. The dots form tight parallel lines that, when

viewed close up, oscillate like those of a Bridget Riley Op Art painting, except more so, a visual equivalent of standing near a speaker that drowns out all the sound around it.

The lines and switchbacks, painted on linen canvas while it is flat on the ground, correspond to mythical stories about the Pintupi and the formation of the desert world in which they live. Some of the stories, which are told in song, can be painted for public consumption, but others are too sacred or powerful to be revealed to outsiders. “My land, my country,” said Mr. Tjapaltjarri, the only English words he uttered during an interview, pointing at a painting with a circle made out of dots. He said it represented a group of ancestral women who appear only at night in the desert around Lake Mackay, a vast saltwater flat that is the primary focus of his paintings.

The way that the lines and curves tell the stories remains mostly a mystery. “I’ve been asking that question for 40 years, and I’ve never really gotten the same answer twice — it’s very inside knowledge,” said [Fred R. Myers](#), an anthropologist at New York University who has [studied the Pintupi](#) and their art since the early 1970s and as a doctoral student helped bring attention to the [Papunya Tula Artists cooperative](#), which is owned and directed by Aboriginal people from the Western Desert. “The paintings operate more like mnemonic devices than like representations of a narrative.”

Mr. Myers was translating for Mr. Tjapaltjarri one recent afternoon in the gallery along with the artist’s nephew, Matthew West, who had accompanied his uncle from Australia. The professor said that while Mr. Tjapaltjarri was proud of his reception in the wider art world, “he is highly respected in his homeland for his knowledge and experience, and his paintings of his stories are really very much tied to that respect.”

[Jeanne Greenberg Rohatyn](#), who owns Salon 94, said she first saw Mr. Tjapaltjarri’s work in the prestigious [Documenta](#) exhibition in Kassel, Germany, in 2012, and that while she had seen works of Desert Painting before, she was particularly struck by his. “I also loved the fact that this abstraction had another kind of abstraction behind it — at least abstraction to us, because we’ll never be able to understand these stories in the way they do,” she said. “And I thought that they looked so contemporary at a time when abstraction is being practiced by so many New York artists.” (His works are selling at the gallery for \$25,000 to \$80,000.)

Mr. Tjapaltjarri was stifling yawns by the end of the interview, not because he was bored but because four days in New York had put him through the wringer. And he was getting on a plane in the morning for the next stop on his American tour, the [Pérez Art Museum Miami](#), where several of his works went on display on Thursday in [a traveling exhibition](#) of abstract Aboriginal painting.

“I’m not homesick yet,” he said, smiling from behind his long gray beard and asking to have his picture taken with a reporter before everyone parted ways. “I’m having fun.”

Direct Link: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/19/arts/design/an-aboriginal-artists-dizzying-new-york-moment.html?_r=0

All Native Americans not the environmentalists portrayed

By JIM SANDEFUR Special to The Telegraph

September 19, 2015

It is interesting how we force such extreme and simplistic stereotypes on Native Americans. When I was growing up in the '50s, the idea that Indians were dirty savages was dying out. But still, despite Tonto, comic books usually portrayed them as bad guys and always untrustworthy and referred to them as "Injuns" and "Redskins." Just a decade earlier, Native Americans were often treated as badly in the North as African-Americans were in the South. Native American Marines on leave from the hell of World War II in the Pacific weren't allowed in New York City bars and restaurants.

During the past several decades the stereotype of Native Americans has turned 180 degrees from the depraved savage to the noble lover of Mother Earth. This stereotype is best typified by the early '70s "Keep America Beautiful" ad showing a tear falling down Iron Eyes Cody's face as he looks at litter. Both stereotypes are ridiculously simplistic and nonsensical.

First of all, when you write about Native Americans you have to narrow it down to a particular culture. In the many millennia before Columbus, thousands of distinct cultures came and went. In all the thickly forested, abundant land between Canada and Argentina, thousands of distinct cultures existed at the same time. So, letting the culture of one tribe at a particular time in history and a particular place on two continents represent all Native Americans is as ridiculous as letting ISIS represent all of Western civilization.

Fred Gunter spouts the usual naive nonsense with "The American Indians were long-term visionaries who trained their young to leave the next generation with a livable planet, not an empty, toxic wasteland." I'm sure that if you talk to one of the Creeks at the Ocmulgee National Monument (don't get me started on how they had nothing to do with the Mississippian Mounds) they will agree 100 percent with Gunter, but they are modern Americans who have not only bought into the same fiction that Gunter has, but also have a vested interest in it.

If you were able to search all the Native American cultures that have existed over this vast landscape and time, you might even find a culture or three that did have the same reverence for the earth as Iron Eyes Cody, but the vast majority would be cultures that saw nature as something to exploit as fully as they could.

Before Asians began following the coast of the Bering Strait land bridge to the Americas and later Asians were trekking between two Canadian glaciers into the heart of North America, the two great continents of the Western hemisphere were a wonderland of mega fauna. Mammoths, mastodons, giant bison, ground sloths, giant armadillos, camels, horses, lions, saber-toothed tigers, dire wolves, short face bears (15 feet tall on hind legs), Glyptodons (an armored mammal about the same size and weight as a Volkswagen Beetle) and many other incredible and wonderful animals walked the American continents.

Soon, just a few hundred years after North and South America were very thinly settled by Paleo-Indians, all of those animals were gone. The overkill explanation has received a lot of push back by politically correct scientists trying desperately to blame the mass destruction of American mega fauna on anything except Paleo-Indians. But every time another mammoth or mastodon is found with a Clovis point between it's ribs and every time another site is found where hundreds of giant bison were driven over a cliff so that a tribe of 20 or so people could gorge themselves on the best cuts of a few animals while almost all the meat rotted makes the overkill theory more plausible.

Even if climate change is accepted as a major factor in the demise of the mega fauna, the Paleo-Indians' mass slaughter of every unfortunate creature that crossed their path will still be a deciding factor. No people, arguably not even modern man, can match the species destruction of the first Native Americans.

Most Native American cultures in wooded areas who practiced farming used slash-and-burn to clear forest. Even though North America was very thinly populated by modern standards, this practice had a huge impact on the fauna and flora of the East Coast of what is now the United States. As one of my history professors at Valdosta State laughingly said over coffee in the Student Center several decades ago, "The only reason there were forests on the East Coast when Europeans got here was because the Indians didn't have bulldozers."

Even now, long after the romantic myth of Native Americas as noble environmentalists is the common wisdom, Native Americans often outdo Euro-Americans in their desire to destroy the environment. One example is the Wind River Reservation. Arapahoe and Shoshone Indians are now demanding the right to kill bald eagles because, with their modern all-terrain vehicles and high-powered rifles, they have wiped out every other animal big enough to shoot.

So, Mr. Gunter, you are wrong about the Native American being an example for us to follow. If we did, the Ocmulgee National Monument would be a parking lot.

Jim Sandefur is a resident of Lizella.

Read more here: <http://www.macon.com/opinion/readers-opinion/article35865477.html#storylink=cpy>

Native student group breaks stereotypes, builds futures

Kristen Cates, GreatFalls 10:26 p.m. MDT September 19, 2015



Michelle Mitchell was stumped last fall on what she could be doing to help her Native American students at Great Falls High close the achievement gap that exists between them and their non-Native peers.

She was at a conference with other Indian Education coaches and teachers from around Montana and approached Office of Public Instruction Indian Education leader Don Wetzel Jr. for advice. He asked her one question that changed her perspective and launched the new interTRIBAL STRONG organization in Great Falls Public Schools.

“He changed my life with five words,” Mitchell said. “Have you asked the kids?”

She picked a group of 12 Native American students to start answering that question. The 12 students were all seniors and the group included star athletes and students with 4.0 GPAs to students who were flying a bit under the radar. From day one, the kids launched a YouTube channel, a Facebook page, created a mission statement and conducted interviews with other students who they wanted to include in an honor society service club for Native American students.

“We were all split up. We kind of felt secluded from each other,” said Keandre Hairston, a GFH senior, chairman of the InterTribal Strong club and a member of the Turtle Mountain Tribe. “It brings people of all different cultures together. The things we do helps move past the stereotypes and the cultural barriers.”

And the hope is soon, they’ll start seeing the achievement gap close when it comes to on-time graduation rates and dropout rates and more opportunities after high school open up for Native American students.

It's all part of Graduation Matters efforts being spearheaded by United Way of Cascade County through a communitywide campaign. Great Falls Public Schools dropout rate was cut in half in the last five years. But more work needs to be done to address the achievement gap among Native American students, said Kim Skornogoski, marketing director for United Way of Cascade County.

In 2014, 92 students dropped out of local high schools, a modern historic low according to Skornogoski, but of those students 42 were Native American.

Statewide, Native American students struggle to graduate — just 65.4 percent of Native American students graduated in four years and 68.2 percent graduated in five years. In Great Falls, only 53 percent of Native American students graduated on time in 2014.

With the goal of cutting the number of Native American students dropping out by 20 percent by 2016, Graduation Matters Great Falls chose to dedicate nearly half of the \$10,000 grant to outreach to Native American students this year, Skornogoski said.

“Students really wanted to be part of the solution, and that’s really, really exciting,” she said. “When we look at the issue we’re trying to overcome history.”

Adrean Blevins’ mom had her when she was 17, and to Blevins’ knowledge, no one in her family had ever earned a high school diploma. She split her early years between Browning and Great Falls. Her dad wasn’t part of her life for long and while her mom worked, her family did receive food assistance.

When she was little, she rebelled and didn’t care much about school work. She said she was rude to her teachers at Longfellow Elementary.

“I had trouble reading as a kid,” Blevins said. “Even though my graders were in the tank, I wanted to go to college.”

With the help of her reading teacher, Blevins started picking up the pace and became interested in her education. She would spend as much time as she could with her nose in a book. Then when high school rolled around, she spent her first year at Great Falls High, then moved to Butte for a few months and then to Spokane in the midst of her sophomore year of high school.

She lived in a one-room studio at the Salvation Army— a pseudo homeless shelter — for a few months before her family got another apartment. In such tight quarters, Blevins said she would go to the library a lot. She liked getting to take English classes that focused on mythology, and she became interested in graphic design. She started to realize she didn’t want to struggle the way her mom had to make ends meet.

“I wanted to take the opportunity to do things,” Blevins said. “It made me see I have a real chance at life.”

She decided it was important to come back to Great Falls for her senior year. She came back to Great Falls High and Mitchell introduced her to interTRIBAL STRONG.

“I wanted to be more involved and I wanted to do things,” Blevins said. “I knew (Mitchell) saw something in me.”

The first 12 students adopted a mission statement: “interTRIBAL STRONG has a mission to develop a support system of American Indian students by decreasing dropout rates, giving back to the community and demonstrating positive Native leadership.”

They started interviewing other students who applied to be part of the service organization. Hairston said it was a nerve-wracking interview and senior Angelina “Gina” Heavygun said she might have been so nervous she cried. But this group was serious about portraying a positive image of Native American students.

The students organized a clothes and household items drive for the Great Falls Rescue Mission, helped with Christmas decorations and cleaning up after the Rescue Mission’s holiday party, raffled off an iPad to raise money for Native student scholarships, volunteered at the Rescue Mission’s Good Friday Easter egg hunt and dinner, and ran the Indian Education department’s elementary awards dinner, too.

This year interTRIBAL STRONG has expanded to C.M. Russell High School as well as Paris Gibson Education Center. They’re looking at taking on more projects, and Hairston said they are gaining the respect of the student council and are regularly asked to contribute to discussions faculty have about student issues.

“I’ve really seen growth in every kid involved in interTRIBAL STRONG,” Mitchell said. “They are more comfortable and confident.”

Though it hasn’t even been a year, Mitchell is confident this group is moving the needle when it comes to Native American student achievement. All 12 of her seniors from last year — including Blevins — are enrolled in college or joined the military.

Blevins starts at Salish Kootenai Tribal College in Pablo this week. She’s going to study media design and she knows she can overcome the stereotype that exists and the history of her family.

“That’s why I’m here,” she said. “To get farther.”

Direct Link: <http://www.greatfallsbtribune.com/story/news/local/2015/09/20/native-student-group-breaks-stereotypes-builds-futures/72452712/?from=global&sessionKey=&autologin=>

Tester pushes to increase access to good meals for Native American kids

Sep 20, 2015

With just weeks remaining before critical child nutrition resources run out, U.S. Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., has sponsored legislation that will improve the access American Indian students have to healthy meals at school.

The Tribal Nutrition Improvement Act will remove barriers that have kept Indian Tribes from accessing the school nutrition resources that other communities currently receive. Tribes are currently prohibited from administering nutrition assistance such as the School Breakfast Program, Summer Food Service Program, and other initiatives available under the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

“Native American kids are at a disadvantage without access to healthy, well-rounded meals. We can’t expect them to do their best if they’re hungry or lacking proper nutrition,” said Tester, vice chairman of Indian Affairs Committee. “This bill takes care of our kids by allowing Indian tribes to provide healthy meals to students so they can succeed in the classroom.”

Tester’s bill also allows local school districts on or near an Indian Reservation to decide which students are eligible for nutrition assistance and authorizes tribal governments to administer USDA nutrition programs to meet the needs of Indian communities.

“One of the most difficult issues facing American Indians and Alaska Natives is food security,” said Jacqueline Pata, executive director of the National Congress of American Indians. “For many of our Native youth, the meals they receive at school are sometimes the only food they have access to on a consistent basis. NCAI supports the introduction of the Tribal Nutrition Improvement Act of 2015 which supports food access for Native youth and furthers the exercise of tribal self-determination and self-governance over food assistance programs.”

According to a 2012 USDA report, 23 percent of all Native American households did not have access to a healthy meal because they are living in poverty.

Six out of seven low-income students who have access to free or reduced-price school lunch during the academic year do not get nutrition assistance during the summer and more than 30 million students have access to free or reduced-price school lunch each day across the nation.

On Sept. 30, several nutrition initiatives including the Summer Food Service Program and the Women, Infants, and Children Farmers Market Nutrition Program are set to expire.

In July, Tester introduced legislation that increases opportunities for Native American children by expanding afterschool initiatives that currently are not available in many Indian communities.

Direct Link: http://www.sidneyherald.com/news/tester-pushes-to-increase-access-to-good-meals-for-native/article_8d550154-5e55-11e5-a7f6-2b0a7649cb44.html

What's offensive? Opinions differ even with Native Americans



The entrance to North Side High School is adored with the massive seal of the school in the marble floor, complete with giant Indian head logo. (News-Sentinel file photo)

COMING TUESDAY

Is there a compromise that could be reached that would allow North Side to adopt a Native American nickname other than 'Redskins' and keep its Indian head logo and signage? Even that subject has its detractors and admirers.

Who is right and who is wrong? The answers aren't easy

By Justin Kenny, jkenny@news-sentinel.com
Monday, September 21, 2015 12:01 AM

Dressed in period Native American garb accentuated with a painted face and a shaved head with a red-dyed ponytail, Russell Morris gives a very succinct answer when asked about the fight over the usage of Indian nicknames and mascots during a recent reenactment at the Historic Old Fort.

"I think the whole thing is pretty stupid," says Morris, who has traced his lineage back to the Shawnee tribe.

A differing opinion of the hot-button issue comes from Doug Poe, executive director and CEO of the American Indian Center of Indiana, Inc. based in Indianapolis.

“My personal opinion is that all names and mascots involved with native names or symbols should be changed,” says Poe. “The Native community feels that after all these years that the general population still does not want to accept them as individuals and get acknowledgement for all the wrongdoings.”

These are just two opinions in a vast sea of thoughts and attitudes within the Native American community in regards to the use of nicknames and mascots depicting Indian peoples.

With North Side High School’s “Redskins” nickname – as well as its Indian head logo – facing an uncertain (at best) future, it is interesting to examine just how diverse the opinions are within the Native American culture on the subject.

“Opinions around the use of Indian-related nicknames are as diverse as the people you ask,” says Kerry Steiner, executive director of the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission. “There are many Native Americans opposed to using nicknames and there are ones who are in favor of keeping them.”

One group vehemently opposed to any type of Native American representation in schools is the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. The Miami tribe has a long history of pushing for the banishment of Indian nicknames and logos. In 1996, the Miamis told Miami University in Ohio in the summer of 1996 that it would no longer support the nickname “Redskins” as its mascot.

Less than a year later, the university changed its mascot to “RedHawks.”

The Miami Tribe has the ear of Fort Wayne Community Schools in relation to the “Redskins” mascot at North Side. It is believed that the replacement of the nickname is only a matter of time.

Some even within the Native American community do not agree.

“If you read in history books – and not the history books in your high school – you will see where the term ‘Redskins’ came from,” says Monty Martin, a Native American reenactor who is honorary member of the Cherokee, Shawnee, Miami and Seneca Tribes. “It was just red body paint made from red okra mixed with bear grease to make it a bug deterrent and a natural sunscreen.

“It’s not a derogatory thing I don’t think.”

But many Federally recognized Indian tribes do not agree. Dozens of tribes and organizations have passed resolutions or issued statements regarding the use of the “Redskins” nickname by the NFL franchise in Washington, including the Cherokee Nation, the Comanche Nation and the Navajo.

“One person may feel ‘Redskins’ is a racist term while another may not,” says Steiner. “I have heard people express opinions on both sides of the issue.”

Wisconsin has been a hotbed in recent years on the subject. In 2010, the state government passed a law that required the Department of Public Instruction to hold a hearing whenever a complaint was issued about a school’s mascot and/or team name. During the life of the law, no school that was brought to hearing was able to keep its nickname.

But in late December of 2013, a law was signed in which complaints would only be heard by the state if they were submitted with signatures from residents in the school district equal to 10 percent of the school’s population.

As of February of last year, 31 schools in Wisconsin still had nicknames related to Native American culture.

“I will let you know that this is an emotional issue on both sides,” says Poe. “The schools and community are so engrained with the use (of) their nickname that they see no wrong doing and even feel that they are doing some sort of honoring to the Native community by keeping them.”

One of the most frustrating parts of the issue for both sides lies with the amount of Native American references used in this area. While North Side is the lone “Redskins” in Northeast Indiana, Belmont and Blackhawk Christian are the Braves while Woodlan is the Warriors.

At least four Fort Wayne Community Schools middle schools – Blackhawk, Kekionga, Miami and Shawnee – are directly named after Indian tribes, as well as Indian Village Elementary.

The question of “How far can you go?” is impossible to avoid.

“So many things in this country have been named after either native people, villages, native words for towns and everything else, now all of a sudden you want to change them?” says LeRoy Mann, a reenactor who frequents the Old Fort and has traced his lineage on his mother’s side back to the Lenape, or Delaware, Indians. “My thing is, if you’re portraying this in the right way ... I don’t have any problem with it.

“But if you’re not going to do it (right) then I got a problem.”

The issue is not going away anytime soon, especially in an area with so many Native American references. The North Side case may be just the first in a larger transition away from Indian nicknames and mascots in Northeast Indiana.

Whether that is right or wrong depends on who you ask even in the Native community.

“That’s the whole problem is that it is so political,” Martin said. “I saw a Facebook post once that said, ‘2015 was the year everybody got offended by something.’

“That’s the way I see it.”

Direct Link: <http://www.news-sentinel.com/news/local/What-s-offensive--Opinions-differ-even-with-Native-Americans>

How Obamacare Will Cost Native American Tribes Millions of Dollars

[Melissa Quinn](#) / September 21, 2015



When Congress passed Obamacare, it exempted Native Americans from the individual mandate. The law did not, however, exempt Native American tribal governments from the employer mandate. Now, tribal leaders are pushing back and saying the employer mandate will cost them millions of dollars. (Photo: Chuck Kennedy/KRT/Newscom)

Native American tribes are pushing back against a provision of Obamacare mandating that tribal governments provide health insurance to their employees. Tribal leaders say it's a "misinterpretation" of the law that will cost millions of dollars.

When Congress passed the Affordable Care Act in 2009, lawmakers exempted Native Americans from the individual mandate, shielding them from having to pay a fine for not having insurance. Native Americans could, however, purchase health insurance on the federal exchange, HealthCare.gov, and have access to substantial tax credits, driving down the cost of their plans.

Rebecca Bishop, a member of the Northern Arapaho Tribe in Wyoming, purchased a plan on the federal exchange costing \$948 a month. According to an affidavit filed with the District Court in Wyoming, Bishop works as a swing shift manager at the tribe's Cee Nu Ku cafe and suffers from rheumatoid arthritis and diabetes. Bishop received a monthly subsidy of \$815 and pays just \$133 a month in premiums, with no co-pays or deductible, she said.

The Northern Arapaho Tribe also subsidizes Bishop's plan, according to court documents.

Congress did not, however, exempt Native American tribal governments from Obamacare's employer mandate, which is already in effect for large employers and goes into effect for small businesses with between 50 and 99 employees next year. Now, tribal governments are beginning to realize the effects the employer mandate could have on reservations' economies and the lives of their employees.

Under the employer mandate, businesses with more than 50 full-time employees—classified as those working more than 30 hours each work—are required to provide health insurance to their employees. Companies that fail to abide by the employer mandate are required to pay a fine of \$2,000 per full-time employee.

The law also states that individuals with access to coverage independent of the exchange cannot get the subsidies available on the exchange, meaning that Native Americans like Bishop who have access to employer-sponsored coverage cannot continue purchasing plans on the exchange and receive their subsidies.

"This is what happens when Congress short circuits regular order, and doesn't go through the relevant committees, and take the time to mark it up, and debate it the right way, and rush a complicated bill through," Ed Haislmaier, senior research fellow in health policy studies at The Heritage Foundation, told The Daily Signal.

“The other large issue is, from a policy perspective, the law also provided a very generous subsidization of coverage through the exchange for Native Americans who didn’t have access to other coverage,” he continued. “This will essentially negate those provisions for a lot of members of tribes.”

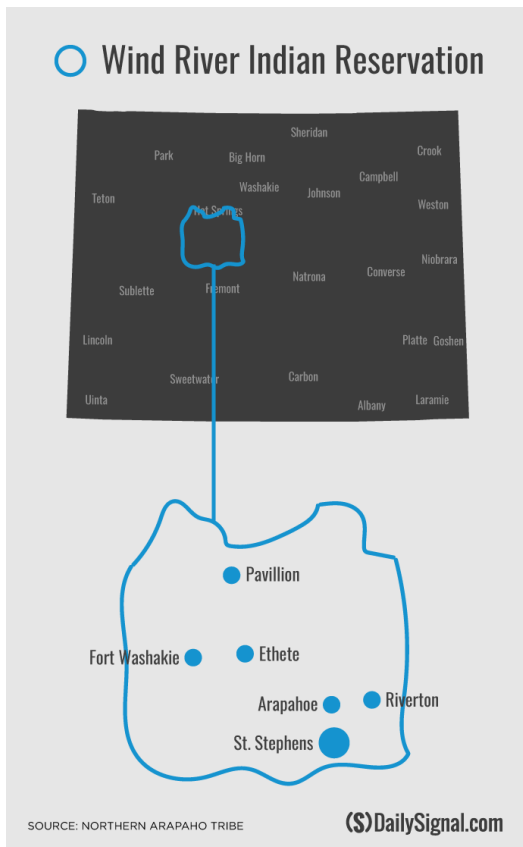


The Northern Arapaho Tribe

The Northern Arapaho Tribe, located on 2.2 million acres in Wyoming, boasts approximately 10,000 members. The tribe employs approximately 1,100 people, who work in the reservation’s hotel, three casinos, college, and other governmental agencies.

After learning that tribal governments were not exempt from the employer mandate, the Northern Arapaho Tribe began offering employer-sponsored health insurance to its employees, costing the tribe more than \$6.5 million.

If the tribe decided to opt out of the employer mandate, it would pay approximately \$2.2 million in fines to the Internal Revenue Service.



The Northern Arapaho Tribe's reservation (Map: Kelsey Lucas/Visualsey)

Despite the high cost of abiding by the employer mandate, not offering coverage to its employees was not an option for Northern Arapaho tribal leaders.

“Based off business decisions, it would be cheaper for us not to provide health care and pay the fine,” Andrea Clifford, assistant general manager of the Wind River Hotel and Casino and county commissioner for Fremont County, told The Daily Signal. “But our leadership, me included, wanted to provide group-sponsored health insurance and the benefits because we know that statistically, most people are struggling with their health.”

Clifford, 43, has worked at the Wind River Hotel and Casino for the last decade and oversees its human resources, payroll, and benefits departments. She and her husband have eight children, and Clifford has coverage through her employer.

Clifford understands the value of having quality health insurance—her mother died of kidney failure at 59 after waiting for a referral from the Indian Health Service to see a specialist—and pushed for tribal employees to purchase coverage on the exchange.

“I saw people who had life-threatening obstacles affect them—cancer, diabetes,” she said. “You have someone who took the small amount of [insurance] and understood what it means, and they had health scares. They were able to go see specialist and things were paid for. They didn’t have to wait for a referral that was denied.”

But Clifford is frustrated that tribes are required to participate in the employer mandate.

“The large employer mandate—I was very surprised. When [Congress] makes wide-sweeping legislation, they always tend to forget about the sovereignty rights of Indian tribes,” she said. “With this legislation, we have a right, and we have to defend that every day: sovereignty.”

The Northern Arapaho’s tribal government has already begun offering its employees coverage through the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, but many employees have seen the cost of their premiums rise, as they are no longer eligible for the subsidies available on the exchange.

“It’s making those small decisions,” Clifford said. “Whether it’s \$30 more a month because the premium went up ... it’s more money out of their pockets that affects their daily lives.”

The Northern Arapaho Tribe filed a lawsuit against Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell and Department of Treasury Secretary Jack Lew last year that called for an exemption to the employer mandate.

According to court documents, the tribe alleged that HHS and the IRS “perhaps inadvertently, created unlawful barriers that block Native Americans from accessing the premiums tax credits and cost-sharing exemption that Congress provided.”

Lawyers for the government argued that Obamacare’s plain text specifically lists government employers—including tribal governments—as a large employer and one that must, therefore, provide its employees with health insurance coverage, according to court documents.

Additionally, the U.S. attorneys representing Lew and Burwell argued that Congress “knew how to exempt Indians from certain [Affordable Care Act] provisions.”

“Congress knew how to—and could have—exempted tribal employers from [the employer mandate], but did not do so,” the government argued. “Instead, Congress included all employers, governmental or otherwise, within [the section].”

In July, a district judge in Wyoming dismissed the Northern Arapaho’s case, arguing, in part, that Congress fully intended for tribal governments to be required to participate in the employer mandate, despite it exempting Native Americans from the individual mandate.

The tribe filed an appeal with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit last month.

“The Northern Arapaho Tribe does not believe that Congress intended to harm working-class Indian people in the Affordable Care Act,” Dean Goggles, head of the Northern Arapaho Tribe’s Business Council, told The Daily Signal in a statement. “Unfortunately,

the IRS has misinterpreted the law, and that action will cost Indian tribes millions of dollars.”

Requests for comment from the IRS went unanswered.

An official with the Department of Health and Human Services told The Daily Signal that implementing new regulations that would override the employer mandate would be difficult in the wake of the district court’s decision. However, the official said that the agency recognizes the challenges the employer mandate poses for tribes and is willing to work with Congress.



Photo: Northern Arapaho Tribe/Facebook

Legislative Fix

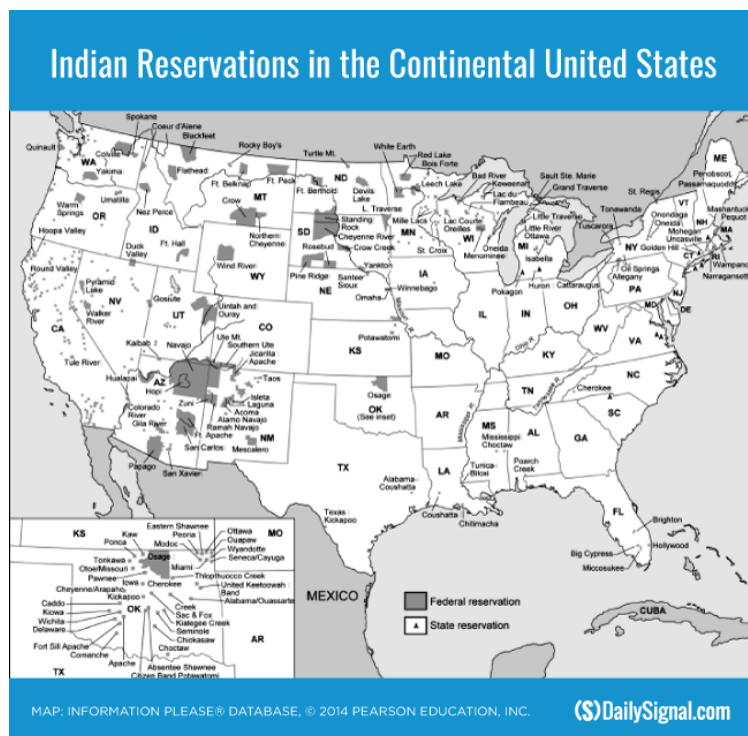
In an attempt to protect Native American tribes from the employer mandate, Republican members of Congress from Idaho, Montana, Oklahoma, and South Dakota proposed their own fix to the high costs facing tribes participating in the provision.

Sens. Mike Crapo of Idaho, Steve Daines from Montana, and John Thune of South Dakota, and Reps. Tom Cole of Oklahoma, Kristi Noem from South Dakota, and Ryan

Zinke from Montana, [introduced](#) legislation in July to exempt both tribes and tribal governments from the employer mandate.

Called the Tribal Employment and Jobs Protection Act, the bill would prevent tribes from having to pay either the fines or costs associated with the provision.

“In South Dakota, tribes often serve as the primary employer of their community members,” Thune said in a July statement. “This mandate would have a significant negative impact on tribes and tribal citizens by diverting much-needed valuable resources away from economic development and important programs toward this burdensome law.”



The Tribal Employment and Jobs Protection Act has the support of a number of tribes across South Dakota and Montana, as well as the National Indian Health Board, a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit that assists tribal governments with health care-related issues.

“The federal trust responsibility of the tribes requires the federal government to provide health care to American Indians and Alaska Natives,” National Indian Health Board Executive Director Stacy Bohlen said in a statement. “The employer mandate of the Affordable Care Act is simply unaffordable for many tribes who will cut essential government services to pay this obligation. The employer mandate on tribal employers contradicts not only the trust responsibility, but provisions in the Affordable Care Act which exempt American Indians and Alaska Natives from the individual mandate.”

The bills in the House and Senate have not yet passed.

Direct Link: <http://dailysignal.com/2015/09/21/how-obamacare-will-cost-native-american-tribes-millions-of-dollars/>

Indigenous Nations v. Junipero Serra: AIM Takes Serra to Court

[Nanette Deetz](#)

9/21/15

Junipero Serra was brought to court by California's tribal descendants of the Mission system in the case of *Indigenous Nations v. Junipero Serra*. He was brought to court by the American Indian Movement Southern California Chapter on Tongva territory in Los Angeles for the crimes of torture, slavery, rape, theft of California indigenous land and promoting the intentional death of thousands of California's indigenous people. The historic effects of this trauma are still experienced today. Serra was found "guilty" of all charges against him.

The "No Sainthood for Serra Tribunal" was presented as satire on September 12 in the form of Guerrilla Theater, and was serious yet funny, allowing for laughter amidst the pain of the Canonization proposed by Pope Francis. This theater piece was conceived and organized by Corine Fairbanks (Lakota), director of AIM Southern California.

"We wanted people to have a voice, and we wanted this protest to be creative and interactive in a positive way," Fairbanks said. "There is so much anger surrounding the proposed sainthood among California's Native tribes, that we wanted people to be creative and have fun too."



Mary Valdemar played the Virgin, and reminded Serra: "You cannot use Christianity to strip away our people. It is not an excuse for loss of language, culture and tradition." (Steven Storm)

AIM Southern California views the Canonization of Junipero Serra as an international issue having global repercussions. The Doctrine of Discovery was an instrument used by

the Spanish Monarchy and the Catholic Church to justify the invasion, enslavement, and genocide of indigenous people. Pope Francis, in his recommendation to elevate Junipero Serra to Sainthood, implies that the Doctrine of Discovery was justified, and atrocities committed against California's First People were justified and by "Divine Right." Canonization for a priest such as Serra, with the large body of his own recorded statements, and well-researched historic fact, presents a profound contradiction and hypocrisy within the Catholic Church.

At the tribunal, Serra was assigned a public defender, portrayed by Fairbanks, and a defense attorney portrayed by Dennis Sandoval Landau (originally from Guatemala, now a senior at Cal State Los Angeles). There was a judge, expert witnesses for the Church, and even Satan, portrayed by San Bernardino College student Jason Martinez.

Martinez portrayed a dancing Satan with lines like, "don't you love what you have now? Inhale the sweet smell of gunpowder in your streets instead of the sweet smell of sage."



Josey Trevor played the comedic, yet serious pregnant nun. (Steven Storm)

The role of Junipero Serra was performed by Kevin Head, a professional actor who also organizes community gardens. "It's tough to play the role of someone so hated. Now I understand why so many California tribal people are angry. The decision to grant sainthood to Serra is wrong," Head said.

The prosecuting attorney, played by Angela Mooney D'Arcy, Acjachemen Nation/Juaneno Band of Mission Indians, and executive director and founder of Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples, asked pointed questions about colonial ideology, forcing the defense to stumble. She asked for a definition of genocide, and forced Serra to say that he believed completely in Church Doctrine at the time.

The prosecution presented its own expert witnesses including the Virgin/Tonatzin, who was portrayed by Mary Valdemar, librarian at San Bernardino Community College and V.P. of Latino faculty and staff. The Virgin reminded Serra: "If you have men who claim to be doing the work of God, yet they prey on the most vulnerable, the women, the children, you have an obligation to speak out. You cannot use Christianity to strip away our people. It is not an excuse for loss of language, culture and tradition."

Lydia Ponce (Mayo, Sinaloa and Quechua, Peru) represented the role of the women working in the fields, who were not fed enough, and were beaten. Her performance brought tears to the eyes of those watching. Josey Trevor (Hopi descendant, Third Mesa and Diné) provided comic relief as the pregnant nun. “Here we are again, Serra. Not only did you rape me (thus my pregnancy) my mother, and our children, but you enabled the Spanish soldiers to beat us and strip us. They came into our room all the time,” the nun said.



Lydia Ponce portrayed women beaten and forced to work in the fields with little food. (Steven Storm)

The tribunal was not only creative, funny, and engaging, but it also asked serious questions about the validity of canonization and the effects of colonization and historic trauma that tribal descendants of the Mission system continue to endure. The play presented the effects of dominant cultural mythology that is taught in California schools as the only narrative about California’s tribal nations, and the importance of a new historic truth.

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/09/21/indigenous-nations-v-junipero-serra-aim-takes-serra-court-161802>

Fargo Native Commission aims to replace Columbus Day with 'Indigenous Peoples' Day'

By [Josh Francis](#) on Sep 21, 2015 at 6:20 a.m.

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FARGO, N.D. – In 1492, Christopher Columbus sailed the ocean blue, as the poem goes.

Any official city recognition of the holiday that commemorates the famed explorer may also sail away if Fargo's Native American Commission gets its way.

The commission will vote tonight on a recommendation urging the Fargo City Commission to replace the Columbus Day holiday on city calendars with a holiday called "Indigenous Peoples' Day," said Fargo cultural planner Willard Yellow Bird Jr.

If city commissioners approve the change, Fargo will be the latest in a string of cities and states to spurn a celebration of Columbus, the Italian explorer whose Spain-backed expedition across the Atlantic Ocean is credited with paving the way for the European colonization of the Americas.

Minneapolis and Red Wing, Minn., both scrapped Columbus Day last year. Moorhead was an early adopter in rejecting Columbus Day, establishing Oct. 12 as "Cultural Diversity Day" in 1993.

Columbus Day remains a federal holiday. It is observed on the second Monday of October, though it was once celebrated on Oct. 12, the day in 1492 when Columbus first set foot in the Bahamas, thinking he'd found a seafaring route to Asia.

It's not an official state holiday in North Dakota, and it's an optional state holiday in Minnesota, a decision left up to specific agencies, according to state statutes.

Fargo and West Fargo do not actively observe Columbus Day as a holiday. Both city's governments, and Moorhead, are open for business on the second Monday in October.

Last year, members of Fargo's Native American Commission considered proposing an Indigenous Peoples' Day, but they worried it would be too divisive.

Yellow Bird said the commission was motivated to propose the change after watching several other cities establish similar holidays this year.

"Fargo itself is way ahead of other cities in North Dakota in regards to working with the native population," Yellow Bird said. "They think it's a good time with all these other cities getting behind it ... and they think right now they have enough votes in the (city) commission to get it approved."

The Native American Commission doesn't want to stop with replacing the holiday in Fargo. Yellow Bird said the next goal would be to replace Columbus Day statewide.

Fargo Mayor Tim Mahoney approached the topic with caution and said he wants to see "how it plays out" before it comes to the City Commission.

"Whenever you start doing stuff individually for certain holidays, one has to be a little bit careful. I'd like to see the rationale behind it and what they're thinking," Mahoney said. "Because then sometimes you inadvertently insult someone else you didn't mean to."

Before Columbus Day last year, Yellow Bird and Clinton Alexander, the Native American Commission chairman and a member of the White Earth Ojibwe Nation, said they wanted a new holiday on what is observed as Columbus Day because it would be a learning opportunity for non-native people who might not know the complete story of Columbus and the atrocities he committed.

"He wasn't a very nice man," Yellow Bird said, referring to Columbus' involvement in the enslavement, sexual abuse and killing of thousands of native people he encountered.

Fargo city commissioners have already rejected an attempt to do away with city recognition of Columbus Day. They voted it down in 1993, taking the opposite route Moorhead city leaders did that year.

The Native American Commission will discuss the resolution proposing Oct. 12 as Indigenous Peoples' Day in a special session at 5:30 tonight in the City Commission chambers.

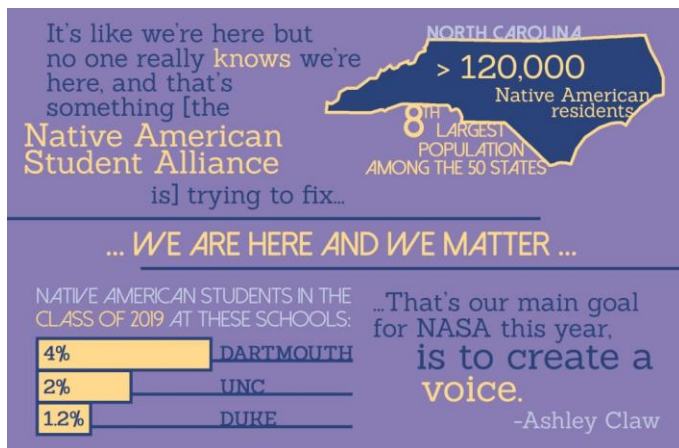
If the City Commission adopts it before this year's holiday, it would have to move fast.

It meets next on Sept. 28. Its next meeting after that is on Oct. 12.

Direct Link: <http://www.grandforksherald.com/news/region/3843359-fargo-native-commission-aims-replace-columbus-day-indigenous-peoples-day>

Duke's Native American Student Alliance seeks growth

By [Frances Berozet](#) | Tuesday, September 22



Although North Carolina has the second-largest Native American population of any state east of the Mississippi River, Native representation among students and faculty is notably small.

Native American students make up less than one percent of students at Duke as of 2014. Representation can be a challenge for a demographic that makes up approximately 1.7 percent of the U.S. population, according to the 2010 U.S. Census. This year, the Native American Student Alliance, or NASA, aims to increase the visibility of Native American students on campus.

“When I say that I’m Native American—I introduce myself that way because I’m proud to say it—[people] say, ‘oh, you’re Native American! You’re the first one that I’ve ever met!’” said sophomore Ashley Claw. “I’m kind of proud to be that first person, but then again, that kind of makes me sad.”

The most notable event organized by NASA is the annual powwow on the Main Quadrangle, which was first held in 2001 and features drum circles and dancers in traditional dress. Although the event was not held last year due to a lack of membership, Claw and sophomore Taylor Miller, co-presidents of NASA, hope to bring it back this year. They also plan on presenting books by Native authors to the summer reading selection committee, “to get the word out to Duke that there are Native students here,” Claw said.

NASA lists one of its goals as fighting outdated notions of Native American life and culture.

“A lot of Americans and people around the world still either imagine Native Americans have disappeared or are riding around the Great Plains on horseback, hunting buffalo with a bow and arrow,” wrote Orin Starn, professor of cultural anthropology and former faculty advisor for NASA, in an email.

Another challenge Native students face is the pressure to succeed, Claw said, which is amplified not only by the relative scarcity of Native American students at Duke, but by the low graduation rates at colleges throughout the country.

“There’s not many Natives who go to college, or pursue higher education,” Claw said. “That’s something that’s always in the back of my mind, even though it really shouldn’t be. It pushes me to work harder.”

Starn wrote that the low college graduation rate among Native Americans is partly due to “underfunded reservation schools that don’t adequately prepare kids for college.”

Part of the problem lies with the lack of Native American faculty at Duke, he noted.

“Unless this has changed in the last few years, there has never been a single Native American faculty member in Duke’s history,” Starn wrote. “It’s really embarrassing and reflects badly on us as a university.”

Starn noted that some of Duke’s peer institutions—in particular Dartmouth and Stanford—are more appealing to Native American students for a number of reasons, including more native faculty, higher percentages of Native students, and larger Native American Studies programs. Four percent of students in the class of 2019 at Dartmouth identify as Native American—compared to just 1.2 percent of the class of 2019 at Duke, according to NASA.

“UNC does much better than Duke in Native American student recruitment, especially of Lumbee and other groups from North Carolina,” Starn wrote.

Two percent of the class of 2019 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is Native American.

With more than 120,000 Native Americans according to the 2010 census, North Carolina has the eighth-largest population of Native American citizens among all states.

“You would think that since North Carolina has a huge Native American population we would be stronger, but it’s really the opposite, which is kind of weird,” Miller said.

NASA originated in 1992 as the Native American Student Coalition and became the Native American Student Alliance in 2003. The organization had only three active members last year, Claw said. She added that more than 10 students attended this year’s welcome meeting, a sign that NASA could have a greater presence at Duke going forward.

“It’s like we’re here but no one really knows we’re here, and that’s something [Miller and I] are really trying to fix—to get people to understand that we are here and we matter,” Claw said. “That’s our main goal for NASA this year, is to create a voice.”

Direct Link: <http://www.dukechronicle.com/article/2015/09/dukes-native-american-student-alliance-seeks-growth>

A compromise on Native American nicknames? It's tricky, but possible



Florida State a prime example of garnering support for its nickname, mascot

By Justin Kenny, jkenny@news-sentinel.com
Tuesday, September 22, 2015 12:01 AM

Editor's note: This is Part 2 of a two-part series looking at Native American representations as school mascots.

Amid over 82,000 cheering Florida State fans, Osceola charges onto the field at Doak-Campbell Stadium atop his horse, Renegade. The famous Seminole Indian leader and his mount race to the 50-yard-line, a flaming spear held high as the crowd erupts. Osceola livens up the crowd before slamming the spear into the ground and trotting off the field.

It is a tradition that dates back to 1978 at every home football game for the Florida State Seminoles, with Osceola portrayed by a student in authentic Native American attire “designed and approved by the Seminole Tribe of Florida,” per the university.

Why is the ceremony with Osceola and Renegade thriving in an otherwise diminishing world of Native American nicknames and mascots?

One word: Support.

The portrayal is validated with the approval and support by leaders of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, although it is panned by other Seminole tribes in the United States. It is one of the few examples of a school working with a particular tribe to portray Native Americans in a way that is satisfactory to some in the Indian community.

“It’s always a good idea if people can reach a compromise and there are tribes who have done that,” said Kerry Steiner, executive director of the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission.

However, that in itself can be difficult. What is acceptable to some Native Americans may not be to others.

Therein lies the problem.

While not official, all indications are that North Side High School will be adopting a new nickname to replace “Redskins” at some point soon. The bigger question now is whether North Side will choose to also change its Indian head logo and move completely away from Native American references or attempt to come to a compromise that would appease the majority (key word) of tribes.

The idea is not without precedent in this area. Monty Martin, a Native American re-enactor who is an honorary member of the Cherokee, Shawnee, Miami and Seneca tribes, has worked with Wabash High School to properly portray its mascot, an Apache.

“Their Indian statue between the middle school and high school is not even an Apache: it looks Lakota or Cheyenne,” said Martin about Wabash. “They needed to make up their mind (who they were going to portray.)”

Eventually, Martin assisted in putting together an authentic Apache outfit to properly depict the school mascot. It not only prevented a stereotypical representation of an Indian but was also a historically accurate representation of an Apache.

“You couldn’t tell he wasn’t an Apache; it looked great,” Martin said. “I wanted this guy not to have a (stereotypical) feathered headdress. I wanted something fresh.”

However, some tribes do not approve of any Native American representation whatsoever, accurate or otherwise. Even re-enactors with Native American lineage who feel they are honoring their ancestors sometimes feel the heat.

“You have some native people who are hard-liners,” said Russell Morris, a re-enactor who has traced his family history back to the Shawnee. “They think we shouldn’t even be doing re-enactments and portraying Indians.

“Then there are other natives that feel like, ‘Hey, we want to do this to show people how our culture was, how our story went and we want to preserve it.’ There’s just two totally different groups.”

The fact remains that – if committed to finding one – there is a Native American organization or tribe that would support any and all avenues in regards to nicknames and mascots. Some outright refuse to support any, while some are only against “Redskins” and other terms and symbols deemed “racist.”

If North Side truly wants to honor Native American heritage and keep some of its identity, there are examples of schools working together with tribes or those with Indian lineage to find a compromise.

“I would ask, ‘What would you prefer (we use) then?’” said Martin. “You approach those who are offended and say, ‘You want us to get rid of Redskins ... how would prefer us to do this and still keep some of our identity?’

“You put the ball in their court.”

Direct Link: <http://www.news-sentinel.com/news/local/A-compromise-on-Native-American-nicknames--It-s-tricky--but-possible>

New historical marker honors Native Americans massacred by vigilante group in Lancaster

K. SCOTT KREIDER | LNP Correspondent

Updated 8 hrs ago

The only way to learn a lesson from history's tragedies is to be sure not to forget them.

On Saturday, the Native American organization Circle Legacy Center took a small step to ensure one tragedy in Lancaster city would not be forgotten — they dedicated a new historical marker honoring 20 Conestoga men, women and children who were massacred in 1763 by a vigilante group known as the Paxton Boys.

The marker replaces a previous one that was placed in front of the Fulton Opera House but has since disappeared.

A group of about 30 people came to the marker on West King Street near the Fulton for the dedication ceremony, which included a Native American blessing of the marker and speeches from Mayor Rick Gray and local historian Jack Brubaker.

"It was important to us that the Conestoga Indians in that massacre never be forgotten," Circle Legacy founder Victoria Valentine said. "And now they won't be. People will see it everyday, and the native people will now know that they are respected and honored here in Lancaster city."

On Dec. 14, 1763, the Paxton Boys attacked the Conestoga, a Susquehannock tribe, marching on homes in Conestoga Town, now Millersville, killing 6. Although the Conestoga were peacefully living among settlers, the Paxton Boys claimed they were spies.

The remaining 16 Conestogas were put in protective custody in Lancaster city, where the Paxton Boys returned to finish the massacre on Dec. 27, 1763, killing and scalping six adults and eight children.

According to Brubaker, who retold the history on Saturday, no one was ever found, tried or convicted of the murders.

"It's a continuing problem for Lancaster, we have a problem that was never solved," Brubaker said. "The leadership of Lancaster, the ministers, and the people in general failed those 20 Conestogas."

Mayor Rick Gray apologized to the Native American community for the massacre.

"On behalf of my predecessors in Lancaster government, I ask for forgiveness for those things we have done, and those things we should have done," Gray said. "We admit we were wrong. We ask for forgiveness."

Circle Legacy president MaryAnn Robins applauded Gray's apology.

"Lancaster is a culturally diverse area, but one of the aspects that is missing is the Native awareness," Robins said. "The apology goes a long way."

Direct Link: http://lancasteronline.com/news/local/new-historical-marker-honors-native-americans-massacred-by-vigilante-group/article_5b7b24b0-60c1-11e5-852d-3b9101486bb1.html

New Zealand's rugby team pays homage to indigenous culture without appropriating it

[Jake Flanagan](#)

September 23, 2015

The All Blacks perform the haka before the start of the 2015 Rugby World Cup Pool C match between Argentina and New Zealand in London. (AP Photo/Christophe Ena)

As Brazil or Italy is to soccer, New Zealand is to rugby. And aside from superior performance on the pitch, the All Blacks—as the national team is known—are perhaps most famous for a special pre-game ritual.

Before each match, the All Blacks, who are set to play Namibia on Sep. 24 in the [2015 Rugby World Cup](#), perform “the haka”—a traditional, full-body dance and accompanying chant derived from Maori culture. (The Maori are New Zealand's indigenous people.)

[Historically](#), the haka is a ceremonial act intended to welcome visitors to a Maori community. Contemporarily, however, it is performed at all manner of special occasions, including birthdays, weddings, and funerals. In a video that went viral earlier this summer, thousands of students [bid farewell](#) to a recently deceased (and much beloved) teacher in the town of Palmerston, by way of the haka:

“Ka Mate,” arguably the most popular haka, was composed in the 1820s by the [Maori chieftain Te Rauparaha](#). It has since been adopted by the All Blacks, who first began performing it before matches in 1905.

As the World Cup unfolds in England, the haka remains an incredible sight to behold. And one that, regardless of one's national affiliations, is bound to hit you with a rush of

adrenaline. The Washington Post's Ishaan Tharoor describes it as a [“perfect act of nationalism.”](#)

I would venture a step further: The All Blacks' rendition of the haka is indeed a superb act of nationalism, but also a heartening example of postcolonial cohesion. ([Rugby has a knack for this.](#)) As Tharoor puts it, “the haka, in its growling intensity, captures ... the solidarity of warriors—both of Maori and non-Maori descent—fighting for a common future.”

It's also an instance of a sports team paying homage to an indigenous culture without simply appropriating it. In this way, the All Blacks stand in stark contrast to controversial US franchises such as the [Cleveland Indians](#), the [Washington Redskins](#), and, sadly, my hometown [Chicago Blackhawks](#)—all of which incorporate imagery and nomenclature [that offends many Native Americans](#).

Some argue such branding [is intended to “honor”](#) indigenous peoples. How this is accomplished by way of leering, cartoonish likenesses or outright epithets is beyond me. Even if such depictions weren't constantly flagged as offensive by Native American advocates, slapping the name of a tribe onto your baseball cap is a decidedly superficial way to demonstrate respect.

The All Blacks' rendition of the haka is a heartening example of postcolonial cohesion. The All Blacks' presentation of the haka is inclusive and participatory. It is, from most reports, authentically performed and assiduously studied by Maori and non-Maori players alike. And this signals, more broadly, New Zealand's relative success at integrating colonial and indigenous societies.

Of course, the treatment of the Maori in New Zealand is by no means been perfect. Nor has it [ever been](#). They have suffered systemic discrimination and disenfranchisement, as have most colonized peoples at some time or another. Large tracts of land were confiscated from them in 1865 following the [Taranaki Wars](#), for example. And as with native populations in the Americas, diseases imported from Europe took a massive toll. Meanwhile, realtors and landlords were permitted to refuse Maori tenants well into the midcentury. A parallel movement to the American Civil Rights Movement sprung up in the 1960s to address such structural inequalities.

Even today, inequality persists. Some critics go so far as to call New Zealanders' affinity [for the haka hypocritical](#), given that the Maori language and other aspects of the culture are dying out, and generally neglected by national schools.

But, on balance, New Zealand's relationship with the Maori is, relatively speaking, something to be emulated. The Maori were [accorded civil rights](#) comparably earlier than most colonized peoples around the world. They were granted rights as full British subjects and had their property rights recognized with the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. This was more than 100 years before the Aboriginal people of Australia were offered full citizenship, and more than 80 years before the Indian

Citizenship Act in the United States. Intermarriage was not necessarily looked down upon.

Politically speaking, the Maori have also been quite successful—again, relatively speaking. They were guaranteed four seats in New Zealand’s parliament starting in 1867, which has since grown to seven. As of the 2014 election, representation far surpasses the seven-seat minimum. There are a total of [25 sitting MPs of Maori descent](#), constituting 21% of the legislature.

When it comes to the political inclusion of indigenous peoples, the US, Canada, and Australia could learn a thing or two from their Kiwi peers. When it comes to paying homage to indigenous cultures in meaningful, respectful ways, the MLB, NFL, and the NHL should also all take note. Because New Zealand and its All Blacks have figured it out.

Direct Link: <http://qz.com/507302/new-zealands-rugby-team-pays-homage-to-indigenous-culture-without-appropriating/>

Anti-Native American or not? Controversial conference on tap in Montana

2 hours ago • [Vince Devlin Missoulian \(Mont.\)](#)

KALISPELL, Mont. | A group that says it does not tolerate racism, but has been labeled “the most notorious anti-Native American group in the country” by the co-director of the Montana Human Rights Network, will hold a “regional education conference” here this weekend.

Among the speakers at the event, sponsored by Citizens Equal Rights Alliance, are Lawrence Kogan, an attorney who filed a lawsuit on behalf of two Montana politicians who sought to halt the transfer of what was then called Kerr Dam to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and CERA’s former chairwoman, Elaine Willman.

Willman moved to the Flathead Indian Reservation this summer, calling Montana “ground zero” for what she says is an attempt by the federal government to “spread tribalism as a governing system while eliminating state authority and duty to protect its citizens.”

The conference is Saturday at the Red Lion Hotel in Kalispell from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. It costs \$40 per person or \$70 per couple in advance, and \$50 or \$80 at the door.

“CERA is dedicated to terminating tribal governments and breaking treaties signed between the United States and Indian nations,” say Rachel Carroll Rivas, co-director of the Montana Human Rights Network, and Chuck Tanner, an advisory board member of the Institute for Research and Education on Human Rights.

Rivas and Tanner recently wrote an op-ed piece in the Missoulian on the upcoming conference.

“The conference is meant to cater to elected officials and community leaders, but its presenters don’t have the credibility or morality to guide our state leaders,” Rivas and Tanner said.

At CERA’s website, citizensalliance.org, the conference is subtitled “This Land Is Our Land ... Or Is It? Corrupt and Unconstitutional Federal Indian Policy and Rogue Federal Agencies.”

Willman says she is “not anti-Indian by any means,” and loves the history and culture of Native Americans.

“I am Indian,” Willman told the Missoulian this week. While not an enrolled member of the Cherokee Tribe, both her mother and grandmother were, she said, and “My husband is Shoshone, and a very direct descendant of Sacajawea.”

CERA’s beefs, Willman says, are not with Native Americans, but with federal Native American policies and “dual citizenship” with the U.S. and tribal governments that she claims cause tribal members to forfeit their civil, constitutional and parental rights.

“My own opinion is that tribal governments have outlived their usefulness,” Willman said. “All citizens should be treated equally.”

The group does three things, Willman says: study federal Native American policies, educate local communities and file amicus (“friend of the court”) briefs.

In a special report for the Institute for Research and Education on Human Rights and the Montana Human Rights Network, Tanner said “CERA leaders promote misinformation about tribal treaty rights and sovereignty, espouse far-right conspiracy theories that promote bigotry against Indian people and others, call for mean-spirited and inflammatory attacks on tribal communities, and have allied their cause with a broader far-right movement that threatens civil rights, environmental protection and economic justice.”

“In the end,” Tanner writes, “CERA’s anti-Indianism is an affront to the United States Constitution and the spirit of tolerance and equality between all peoples.”

Willman said CERA used to hold an annual national conference in Washington, D.C., but has found regional conferences such as Saturday's in Kalispell to be more effective.

"Every time we do a regional conference, the national Indian community comes out and trashes us," Willman says. "They did it in Riverton (Wyoming) last year, and they're doing it here. But that's not going to stop us. We're not going to disappear."

Rivas and Tanner call the conference "an appalling mix of anti-Indian sentiment, one-world government conspiracy theories and militia-style ideas about federal government agencies."

Following a welcome by CERA vice chairman Butch Cranford of Plymouth, California, Willman will speak.

Her talk is titled "Courage is Contagious."

Willman said she left an excellent job in Wisconsin to move to Ronan to help opponents of the CSKT water compact. She was invited to speak in Montana five times, and "I met so many wonderful people at high risk of losing their livelihoods" because of the compact, "I felt I need to be here, I needed to move here."

Willman was director of tribal affairs for the village of Hobart, located just outside Green Bay and next to the Oneida Reservation. The village and the Oneida Tribe of Native Americans have a relationship that the Green Bay Press Gazette has described as "strained" and "contentious."

Advertisement

Willman said she "loved living on a real Indian reservation" but when tribal gaming came into being, "We woke up to a whole different neighbor that wanted to tax and govern non-members."

Cranford is up next with "It's NOT a Done Deal!" followed by Kogan, the New York City attorney who represents Montana state Sen. Bob Keenan, R-Bigfork, and former state Sen. Verdell Jackson, R-Kalispell, in a lawsuit that sought to keep CSKT from taking over what is now Salish Kootenai Dam earlier this month.

A federal judge denied the request, saying Keenan and Jackson "failed to raise any fact or point to any evidence in the application for transfer that would materially call into question (the tribes') suitability to serve as licensee."

U.S. attorneys have since asked the judge to dismiss the lawsuit. Kogan's talk is titled "Kerr Dam, the CSKT Water Compact and Federal Challenges."

CERA's legal counsel, Lana Marcussen of Phoenix, will wrap up the morning session with "How the United States Owns Water."

The afternoon will include a keynote address from village of Hobart President Richard Heidel and an appearance by Wyoming rancher Andy Johnson, who has racked up \$16 million in fines from the Environmental Protection Agency in a fight over a stock pond on his land.

Also on the docket: Montana state Sen. Jennifer Fielder, R-Thompson Falls, who will talk about her efforts to transfer federal lands to the state, and Debbie Bacigalupi of Siskiyou County, California. Bacigalupi's talk is titled "Integrating Federal Indian Policy with Agenda 21, Agenda 2030 and United Nations."

Willman and Marcussen will wrap up the day with a presentation called "Federal Agency Expansion of Tribal Governance."

Willman says the conference "provides more opportunity for people to be educated about federal Indian policy. I like to say the best-kept secret in this country is the conversations federal agencies have with tribal governments. Tribal members are not even aware of them until their plans are implemented."

Say Rivas and Tanner: "While conspiracy-mongering is easy to mock, it is really quite harmful. Falsely accusing tribes of trying to destroy the United States promotes bigotry toward indigenous peoples. CERA's conference will feature this mean-spirited intolerance."

Direct Link: http://rapidcityjournal.com/news/local/anti-native-american-or-not-controversial-conference-on-tap-in/article_860331d6-85e5-5dec-a928-f5475f25a119.html

Winnebago, Omaha tribes to receive national Native American award

September 23, 2015 4:45 pm • [KIRBY KAUFMAN kkaufman@siouxcityjournal.com](mailto:kkaufman@siouxcityjournal.com)

Members of the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska voted Tuesday to advance 16 people, including seven incumbents, who will compete for eight Tribal C... [Read more](#)

WASHINGTON, D.C. | The Winnebago and Omaha tribes of Nebraska were scheduled to be honored Wednesday night for contributions to national Native American health care policy.

The tribes were to jointly receive the National Impact Award during the 32nd National Indian Health Board Consumer Conference in Washington, D.C., said Anne Thundercloud, a spokeswoman for the Winnebago Tribe.

According to a letter from the NIHB, the tribes received attention from tribal leaders across the United States for efforts to improve Native health care.

Thundercloud said the award recognizes the tribes' push to overhaul management and treatment at the tribal hospital on the Winnebago reservation. The facility serves both tribes.

Last month, the Indian Health Service, which oversees the hospital, announced it planned to replace four top officials at the facility. The tribes previously met with IHS officials in Sioux City and [argued the dismissals would help restore Medicare funding to the hospital](#) and ensure that patients receive adequate care.

In July, the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services terminated its contract with the Winnebago hospital. The CMS found [deficiencies at the hospital had caused "immediate jeopardy" to patients](#), including a man who died of kidney failure on Jan. 1.

The Winnebago Tribe also was scheduled to receive the 2015 John Pipe Voices for Change Award for its Whirling Thunder Wellness Program at the Blackhawk Community Center, 100 Bluff St.

The award, sponsored by the American Diabetes Association, honors the program for effective diabetes treatment and prevention for Natives. According to the organization, Natives are more than two times as likely to have diabetes as non-Hispanic whites.

Direct Link: http://siouxcityjournal.com/news/state-and-regional/nebraska/winnebago-omaha-tribes-to-receive-national-native-american-award/article_e527326b-f95c-5592-bdcc-fc421ae55ad9.html

Buffalo provided 'everything' Native Americans needed



An illustration of a Native American buffalo hunt. The Native Americans used the buffalo for several purposes. Now a local group is trying to restore and strengthen that part of Native culture.

11 hours ago • [Jimmy Nesbitt Journal staff](#)

No part left unused

From their organs to their teeth and dung, every part of the buffalo was used by Native Americans.

Among the most used parts was the stomach, which was often converted into a water container or cooking pot. The bones were carved into arrowheads and tools such as knives and shovels.

The buffalo's thick hide provided warmth during winter and could also be used as a blanket. Dried buffalo dung was the primary source of fuel used by Native Americans on the Great Plains.

For many generations of the Lakota people, the buffalo was central to their lives on the Great Plains.

"The Lakota regarded the buffalo as sacred and without them they might not have survived," said Julie Brazell, Custer State Park naturalist.

They used all the parts of the animal and let nothing go to waste, and the buffalo served as their main sources of food, shelter and clothing. The buffalo was also a key part of ceremonial and spiritual events. "The Lakota believed the buffalo provided everything they needed," Brazell said.

The Lakota, like the buffalo, were nomads and following the herds was important because they believed the animals knew where the next food source would be.

The connection that the Lakota and other Native Americans had with the buffalo was nearly destroyed in the 1800s after European settlers moving west slaughtered the animal by the millions.

The buffalo nearly went extinct, and without the animal the self-sufficient lifestyle of the Native Americans was disrupted. "When you eliminate that model, a lot of things are lost," said Jim Stone, executive director of the InterTribal Buffalo Council.

The Rapid City-based organization began working in the early 1990s to restore buffalo populations on Native American lands, helping tribes to build infrastructure and to acquire the resources needed to accommodate the buffalo. Those needs can be massive: A single buffalo, for example, eats around 28 pounds of grass per day.

Because there isn't a lot of grant money available for buffalo restoration programs, the biggest challenge for tribes seeking to bring buffalo back to their land is maintaining adequate resources. "A lot of times, tribes are cash-strapped. They don't have a lot of money available," Stone said.

The council started as a grassroots effort that involved just seven tribes. Now there are 60 tribes in 19 different states affiliated with the council, and through their efforts they've been able to raise the buffalo population on those tribal lands to 15,000.

"A lot of tribes, that's the cornerstone of their program — restoring the buffalo culture," said Stone, who is a member of the Yankton Sioux Tribe.

Direct Link: http://rapidcityjournal.com/news/local/buffalo-provided-everything-native-americans-needed/article_73757267-3cd0-5922-bd1e-4bee2cb9c131.html

Impact Of Métis On Augusta Area Presented In Lectures



Al Wiseman explains the lifestyle of the Métis during recent lectures at the Augusta Area Historical Society Museum in Augusta.

Posted: Tuesday, September 22, 2015 2:48 pm

By Darryl L. Flowers

On Sunday September 13, the Augusta Area Historical Society had a full house as Al Wiseman and Reg Wearley offered lectures on the impact of the Métis Indians.

Wiseman attended school in the nearby community of Gilman, then went to school in Augusta. He graduated from high school in Choteau. Wiseman told the crowd that he was also a member of the Little Shell tribe. He recounted the many family names in the Augusta and Gilman communities with roots in the Métis.

Wiseman said that electricity first came to Augusta in 1948, and he told of his first paying “full day” job – at eight years old – driving a team for \$3.00 per day plus one meal. At the time Wiseman said he could get a train ticket from Gilman to Augusta for a dime.

He said the Métis found work on the railroad, “cowboying,” sheep ranching and working for the county. A good ranch-hand could fetch \$150 per month. Wiseman added that “ranchers feed good.” Many Métis also worked clearing irrigation ditches for the Greenfields Irrigation District.

When it came to tribal gatherings, Wiseman said that the Métis did not do powwows until later years when they joined with the Little Shell, “we did fiddle dances.” Wiseman named off a long list of Métis fiddle players from the area.

Reg Wearley was also raised in Augusta. He went on to teach in Choteau schools and later ranched. Now, he and his wife run a pottery studio, Val Knight Studio, in Big Arm, Montana.

Wearley explained that the word “Métis” is of French origin, meaning “mixed blood.” The tribe was so named due to their mix of French Canadian and Indian. The Indian lineage goes back to the Chippewa. Later the Cree tribe as well as Scots were added to the mix.

The Métis, according to Wearley, came to the United States in three waves out of Canada. The Métis were not wanted by the Canadians or the “full bloods,” according to Wearley. In one of the waves, the Métis’ lands were reapportioned by the Canadians when the grid survey system was introduced. Traditionally, the Métis would divide their lands so that each family would have access to water. The grid system ended that.

In the Augusta and Gilman areas, whenever there was a move to drive the Métis back into Canada most avoided persecution by laying low and keeping to themselves.

Al Wiseman wrapped up the lectures with a presentation of items he had crafted showing the ingenuity of the Métis, who constructed lodges out of logs to live in rather than tipis.

Direct Link: http://www.fairfieldsuntimes.com/news/article_9bd4e6a0-616a-11e5-9ecb-13294e2e95c3.html